

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

BONUS TAX REJECT



President Barack Obama speaks about AIG bonus payments as he makes remarks to small business owners, community lenders and members of Congress, Monday, March 16, 2009, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

See **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

SPORTS NEWS

SIGN OF RELIEF



Retief Goosen, of South Africa, holds his trophy after winning the Transitions Championship golf tournament Sunday, March 22, 2009, at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor, Fla. Goosen finished with an eight-under-par 276.

See **Sports Today**

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Aruba.com is inviting you to join

Go to Aruba.com and register



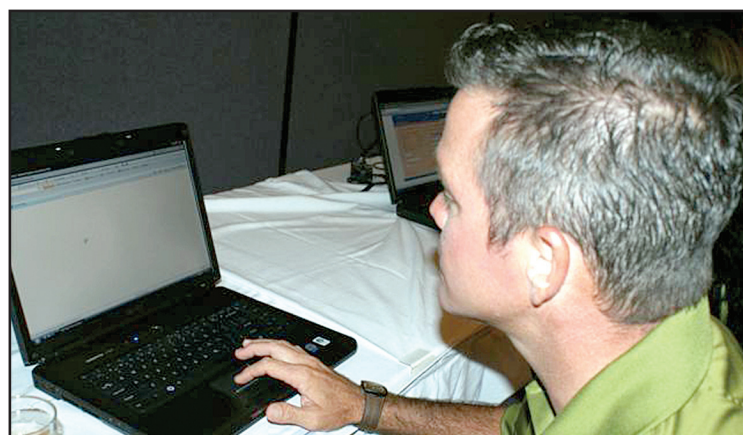
ORANJESTAD – Aruba.com was just launched in its new revamped and redesigned format offering a first: social networking capabilities, just like Face Book.

The official island website has a social aspect which at its core believe that “Un Aruba Dushi pa biba, ta un Aruba dushi pa bishita – Aruba which is great to live in, is wonderful to visit.” And that is why the Aruba Tourism Authority in collaboration with the Aruba Hotel & Tourism Association came up with the concept of creating a portal, a cyberspace community where

locals and visitors can socialize, share experiences, and become friends.

You are invited to go to Aruba.com, register and create your profile, load your pictures and videos, make yourself part of the on-line community. Signing up is easy, on the aruba.com home page. As an island resident, when you become a member of aruba.com, you are extending hospitality and friendship to visitors, as part of the current 2009 marketing campaign titled: “90,000 friends you haven’t met yet.”

As a visitor, should you wish to



sign up, you are in fact creating a long lasting relationship with Aruba and Arubans.

The new Aruba.com invites all Arubans, and all visitors, regardless of age and occupation to get involved, interact and share their experiences.

The idea came about when the Aruba Tourism Authority in conjunction with Lowe of New York conceived the “90,000 friends you haven’t met yet,” a campaign starring island personalities. Aruba has always been famous for the friendliness of its people; now the friendly people of Aruba may all be met via Aruba.com

The new website is a partnership between ATA & AHATA. While AHATA representing the private sector directs the website’s booking engine and business aspect, ATA, representing the public sector drives the content and is in charge of updating the website with the latest, most accurate details.

You are invited to go to Aruba.com, register and load your profile, tell about your life, share your love for the island, and become part of the One Happy Island philosophy. Pictured here Angelo, Oliver & Osaira creating their own profiles on Aruba.com

Bingo winner enjoying the Radisson



PALM BEACH - Antonio Rangel is pictured in Aruba Today for being the lucky Radisson Resort Bingo Winner. He won lots of great prizes and had his picture taken with the resort’s signature birds.

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At Aqua Grill restaurant

"Lent" is not a four-letter word!



PALM BEACH -- Growing up Catholic, I use to dread every Friday of the Lenten season; we were subjected to yucky fish! Whether it was soggy fish sticks or fish straight from the grocery store freezer that looked like it had been there since the ice age, Friday night at the dinner table was not culinary bliss by any stretch. Fast-forward to today, and I look forward to Fridays during Lent

as an excuse to eat dinner at Aqua Grill, Aruba's fresh-only seafood restaurant in Palm Beach, where guests enjoy amazing seafood delicacies prepared by an award-winning chef from an open-view kitchen set in a contemporary New England fish house décor.

Live Maine lobster and the island's largest raw bar headline a menu that also includes fresh local catches and fresh fish flown in daily prepared over a wood-burning grill, broiled, pan-fried, or deep fried. Aqua Grill chefs also prepare house specialties, including a Cioppino with lobster, shrimp, scallops, mussels, clams, and calamari simmered in a light tomato sauce with red wine, saffron, fennel, and herbs. Several pasta dishes, steaks and chicken, and a complete children's menu are also served.

Aqua Grill is located next to Amazonia and across from the Hyatt. For more information and reservations, call 586-5900.



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Cynthia Tramotano honored at the Marriott Surf Club



PALM BEACH - Recently at Marriott Surf Club vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished

Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at Marriott Surf Club they call their home away from home. Cynthia Tramotano was honored as distinguished



visitors after visiting Aruba for 14 years.

Pictured: Mr. Ricardo Croes together with Cynthia and also Freya from the Marriott Surf Club

Richard & Karen O'Kane honored at the Renaissance Ocean Suites Resort



ORANJESTAD - Recently at the Renaissance Ocean Suites vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded

the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at Renaissance Ocean Suites they call their home away from home. Richard & Karen O'Kane were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 20 years.

Pictured Mr. Ricardo Croes together with Richard & Karen and also staff from the Renaissance Ocean Suites.

MONDAY'S CRAB NIGHT



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Caesar salad with fresh Caribbean shrimp and Mandarin orange slices
The GIANT crab sampler includes Alaskan king crab legs, snow crab legs, fried soft shell crab, stuffed crab back, Maryland crab cake, lemon, Tartar sauce and drawn butter.



Open Daily

Located downtown in the Renaissance Marketplace

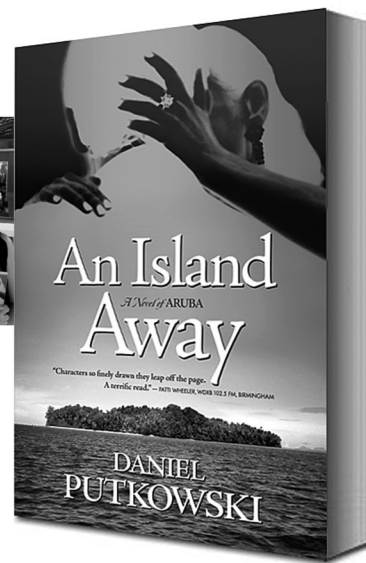
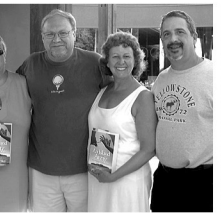
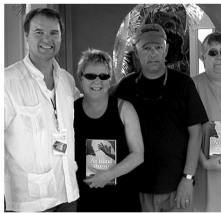
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Charlie's Bar - San Nicolas
Plaza Bookshop - Dakota

Surprise at Casa Tua Barcelona



ORANJESTAD -- Birthday boy Dooley Tromp, was given a surprise birthday celebration by his lovely wife Sylvina Medina. Sylvina invited Dooley's good friends to Casa Tua Barcelona, then got Dooley out of the house with the help of a friend, into town and up the stairs, welcoming him with flutes of champagne as he walked in unsuspecting and totally taken by surprise.

The party organized by

Isabella Kainama-Rugebregt, Marketing Manager, Casa Tua Restaurants, served delicious Tapas, Albondigas, Tortillas Patatas, Jumbo Shrimp Tarentina, Spanish deviled

eggs, Goat cheese and Gouda with garlic bread, Aceitunas - green olives filled with red pepper, Spanish Paella, befitting the Friday evening gathering and homemade Tiramisu for dessert. The free-flowing pitchers of Sangria, was made fresh by Stefan, who also poured the bottomless flutes of champagne.

Pictured here Dooley and friends on the wraparound al fresco terrace of Casa Tua Barcelona, celebrating his surprise birthday.

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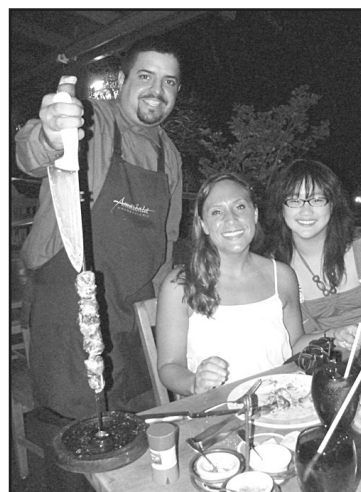
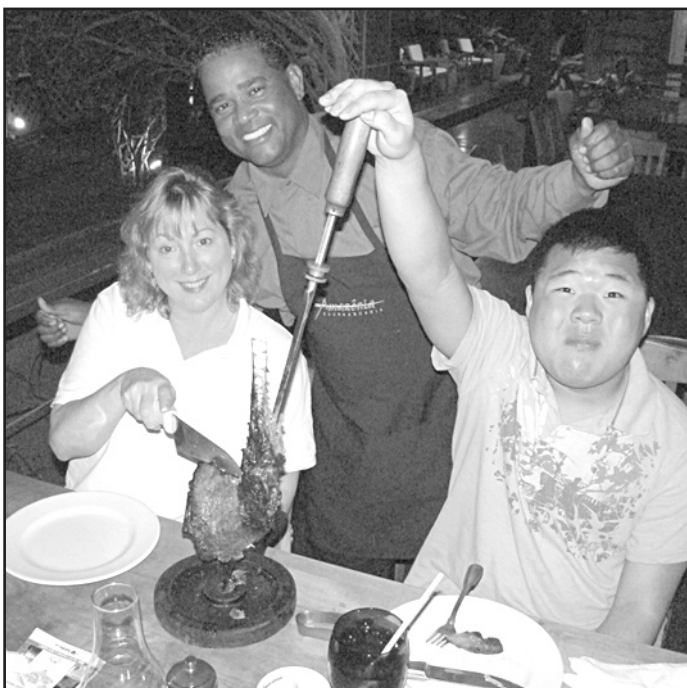
Friends & Families have a great time at Amazonia Churrascaria



PALM BEACH -- Rebecca Lynch and kids Michael and Kelly, from Connecticut, staying at the Marriott Surf Club, invited Kelly's girlfriend Mari to come to Aruba for the first time. The gang had a great time at Amazonia Churrascaria giving the bacon wrapped beef, two thumbs up.

David Isaac and his family, from New Jersey, on the island for the second time enjoyed every bite from salad bar to dessert while girlfriends Andrea, Barbara and Elisa, from NJ, introduced Andrea, a first-timer to the island, to the wonder of the Amazonia

menu with over 16 cuts of Rodizio charcoal grilled meats. Amada reports simply loving everything.



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Jorge Eliecer Villada has a whale of a birthday

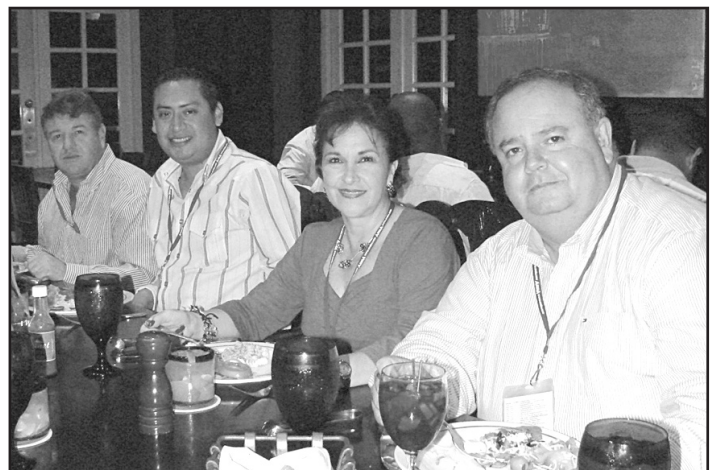


PASEO HERENCIA – The management and staff of Moby Dicks Seafood Restaurant stunned Jorge Eliecer Villada with a surprise birthday celebration. The group sang Happy Birthday in three different languages then continued the celebration by smearing his special dessert all over him. Congratulations to Jorge Eliecer from all of your friends and family.



CATA Acknowledges Westin

Celebrating an important award at Amazonia Churrascaria



Palm Beach – Sales executive Diego Garcia is seen in our pictures with CATA delegates from Latin America, on the island for the annual tourism conference. Diego has just received the Star Award presented to the Westin for the unprecedented quality of service it rendered to the Latin American convention market. Diego and his team were rewarded for flawless execution of small and large group events, by CATA tourism executives enjoying the unique ambiance of Amazonia Churrascaria and the wonderful food.

The French Steakhouse Gets a Seasonal Refresh



Eagle Beach – Locals and visitors have been looking forward to the seasonal menu tweak and recharge of the French Steakhouse, under the expert direction of executive chef George Hoek. The good news reached us this week. The master has finally revealed his grand retouch, resulting in a packed dining-room every night of the week. Among appetizers Chef George now lists his popular classics, Escargot a la Pernod

and Prosciutto Ham & Melon next to his novel selections, Authentic Aruba Keeshi Yena and Tropical Crab Cakes with pineapple and mango salsa. The classic menu of the French Steak House received a pepped-up twist, also evident in the salad section featuring a Honey Glazed Salmon Salad and a Hearts of Palm with Roasted Pepper salad. The menu now boasts more seafood, from fresh fish to the totally sinful and amazingly

decadent Caribbean Stuffed Shrimp with Crabmeat and Bacon, which became an instant hit. The tequila and sweet chili glaze, lends the Jumbo shrimp a pure taste of heaven!

The famous South American Churrasco steak, a signature preparation, now shares the limelight with juicy USDA beef specialties such as NY Sirloin and Filet Mignon.

And Chef George definitely took the boring out of chicken with his Jerk Curried Skewers and Lemon Herb Broilers.

Open 7 days a week from 5:30 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. the French Steakhouse is blessed with the nicest staff and a delightfully renovated dinning room with sparkling China, crisp linen, an interesting bread basket, colossal desserts and live jazz on piano with Eddy Samson.

Hungry patrons will appreciate the Ambassador's 5-course menu featuring the run for the menu highlights for just



\$34.95 per person.

At the Manchebo Beach Resort

& Spa, on Eagle beach. □

Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano delivers authentic Italian flavors

Giorgio's
Ristorante Italiano

Manchebo Beach Resort -- Italian food lovers needn't walk far. Giorgio's Ristorante Italiano is located within walking distance of all low-rise resorts, on Eagle Beach, at the charming Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa.

The Manchebo's Executive Chef George Hoek concocted an irresistible menu of Italian classic specialties with a contemporary feel, served al fresco, on the garden terrace or around the tropical pool.

From Anti Pasti to Insalata, Zuppa to Pesce, the menu welcomes diners with familiar recipes, such as Bruschetta di Carciofi, Calamari Fritti, Melanzane All'Agro Dolce, Minestrone, Salmone Affogato in Bianco and the Pescatore, starring the bounty of the Sea, which distinctly demonstrates the talents of Executive Chef George Hoek, a master of flavorful sauces, delicious combinations and delightful presentations

At the heart of the menu, the Pasta section, delivers a nice variety to be shared by two or enjoyed unabashedly solo – go ahead, you only live once - with Fettuccini Alfredo, Penne All'Arrabiatta and Tortellini ala Gorgonzola, just to name a few.

Pizza appears on Giorgio's menu for those craving thin crusts and ample toppings, with a selection of classic pies made to order and served with a genuine Italian accent. Angelo, the Maitre D is Italian, naturally.

Giorgio's Piatti Principali feature a hit parade of dishes, which make it very difficult to decide between Cotoleta alla Parmigiana, Petto di Pollo Saltimbocca and Costolette D'Angelo alla Cacciatore. Giorgio's Osso Bucco will have you sighing with great satisfaction as you heap the braised veal shanks flavored with herbs and a red wine reduction, escorted by potato gnocchi, onto your fork and get lost in the symphonic, robust flavors.

Chef George says General Manager Edgar Roelofs, is an incredibly valuable addition to our team as his food is divine, and his desserts deserve a special article on their own!

To check things out yourselves, call Giorgio's at the Manchebo Beach Resort. It is open for dinner nightly. □



Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar perfects beach cuisine

Pega Pega

Café & Beach Bar

Eagle Beach – Pega Pega Café & Beach Bar at the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa recently unveiled its new lunch & cocktail menu, conceived and presented by executive chef George Hoek.

True to his Sun Splashed Cuisine promise, the chef delivered a contemporary menu, listing favorite dishes from around the world, deriving inspiration off US, Mexican, Thai, Jamaican, Cuban, Greek and Mediterranean menus, all served with a tropical, Caribbean flair.

For starters Wings on Fire, Chicken Quesadilla and Nacho Chips & Cheese, are served in abundance, garnished and accompanied by delicious dips.

Chef's Sun-Sational Salads feature fresh and healthy ingredients brimming with authentic flavors.

The Blue Mermaid heaps sliced mango and banana on mixed greens, onions, and peppers with caramelized walnuts, sprinkled with lemon and pepper vinaigrette, competing with a terrific Shrimp Salad, flavored with Jamaican

jerk spice, papaya salsa and ginger cream dressing for the honor of being the #1 seller.

The sandwich board is equally inventive as Cudarebo Tacos translate into flour tortillas filled with seared filet of grouper, garnished with diced tomato, served with fruits and a garlic-cumin aioli. The Cuban pressed Chicken Sandwich with cilantro adobbo, served on foccacia roll topped with melted Swiss cheese, gives the Mediterranean Grilled Vegetable Wrap competition, on the list of jawbreakers.

Most original creation on the refreshing lunch menu is the Grilled Grouper Rueben Sandwich on brown rye bread, topped with sauerkraut, Thousand Islands dressing, capped with melted Swiss cheese, served with French fries.

While Chef Hoek went out of his way to bring novelty to mid-day platters, the classics also make an appearance on his menu starring oversize Beef Burgers, Philly Cheese Steak Sandwiches and Hot Dogs.

The Pega Pega tropical & frozen cocktail list, with fresh fruit or ice cream smoothies, daiquiris, coladas and margaritas, leaves nothing out, including Yellow Birds, Sex on the Beach and Mudslides, making a lunch-time brain-freeze, extremely easy to get!

The Pega Pega, one of Aruba oldest beach bars is open on fabulous Eagle Beach, with unrivaled views, caring, gracious service, and relaxed atmosphere, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. The bar opens at 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.



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Red Sail Sports teamed up with the Hyatt Regency and Marriott Resort to create an unforgettable Dinner Sail experience. Sure to be the highlight of your Aruban holiday, this Dinner Sail takes place this coming Wednesday and Thursday from 6 – 9 pm. Specially priced at \$95 per person, the Dinner Sail offers excellent value as it combines a sail along Aruba's scenic coastline and a

spectacular view of the sunset with a tantalizing buffet catered by award-winning chefs. Dinner includes appetizers, salads, main courses and dessert selections. Champagne, red and white wine and beer is served along with an open bar which offers a variety of tropical cocktails, including some Aruban specialties – be sure to ask for a Captain's Special!

Wednesday's nights Dinner Sail features a traditional Caribbean themed buffet catered by the chefs from the Marriott Resort. Thursday's night Dinner Sail features a buffet with a Mediterranean twist. Whichever night you choose, you're sure to enjoy a unique dinner experience. Aruba's trade

winds provide the ideal conditions for sailing aboard Red Sail Sports' top quality, luxurious catamarans. Set sail and join Red Sail Sports fun filled Half Day Luncheon or Antilla Snorkel Sail. These trips are safe for kids of all ages and bring you to the best snorkeling spots in Aruba, including Aruba's most famous snorkeling spot – the wreck of the Antilla where you can see yellowtail snapper, angelfish and dozens of other tropical fish. Red Sail Sports also offers a Sunset Sail where you can relax with a cocktail and enjoy the spectacular Aruban sunset – truly the best way to watch the sun go down while on your Caribbean holiday. If you want to discover



Aruba's underwater world, be sure to get in touch with Red Sail Sports. Learn to dive in one day with the Discover Scuba Dive Course, get PADI certified or join us on our daily one and two tank dives.

Red Sail Sports is Aruba's leading dive and watersports operator. Activity desks are located at the Hyatt Regency, Marriott Resorts and on Renaissance Island. To make reservations call 586-1603 or go to www.redsailaruba.com. Be sure to visit one of Red Sail Sports' stores for the latest in swimwear, beach essentials, T-shirts and souvenirs.

Looking for the legendary seafood entrees?

The freshest seafood is at Moby Dick's

PASEO HERENCIA – inside is studded with Moby Dick's has one mission; to take you to the depths of the blue ocean to taste some of the most exquisite dishes to come from the deep. What a truly beautiful restaurant this is, and what a unique interior to match. The

artwork, amazing glass carvings, and both floors are dominated by gigantic fountains, with water running from ceiling to floor along multicoloured lit fibre optic cables. The stairway is lined by an impressive painting which





runs along the complete wall. The menu promises to be a true seafood lovers dream. Lobsters, fresh fish fillets, shrimps, Moby Dick's has everything on the menu. There is of course a land lubbers section for those who are so disposed. The wine list is impressive to say the least, and the cocktails are definitely worth a taste.

Moby Dick's is open for lunch as well. The chef has made a well rounded, extensive menu for you to choose from. You will find what you want, whatever your craving may be at that time. The staff is amongst the friendliest on the island, ever so attentive to your every whim. So long story short, for unbelievable seafood in unique surroundings, go to Moby Dick's. You'll have a whale of a time!



Don't leave Aruba without trying the BLOODY OYSTER! It is the ultimate delicacy known by deep sea connoisseurs. This is heavenly combination of Tomato Juice, Cold Vodka, Oysters, Shrimp, Tabasco, Lime and Pepper.

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Ventanas del Mar is Unique Dining


WESTPOINT – Located on the lush grounds of Tierra del Sol is Ventanas del Mar Restaurant. The plush surroundings offer the perfect backdrop for a romantic dinner outside in the cool evening breeze, or a refreshing lunch in the afternoon shade. Ventanas del Mar's location is absolutely unique on the island; words simply can

not describe it. Contrary to popular belief, Tierra del Sol is open to the public. Don't be scared by the security gate, you will find you are more than welcome for lunch or dinner. Get away from the busy beaches for a day and come and soak up the rest and tranquility that only Ventanas del Mar can offer you.



Executive Chef Jim Rooseman has taken the level of cuisine to a whole new level, bringing you the most exquisite dishes and original flavors, in a variety that actually cannot be described except by saying the fare is simply delicious. The excellently trained staff awaits your every need, whether you want advice on which wine to choose from the vast wine vault, or anything else that comes to mind. Consider yourself cordially invited for lunch and/or dinner!

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“Aruhiba” Aruba’s homemade cigar



ORANJESTAD - Benjamin Petrochi has started the newest

export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called ‘Aruhiba’. These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrochi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold cigars from outside, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of “Aruhiba” cigars in Aruba. The process took 5 years Petrochi’s dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and



process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar case is specially designed for the cigars with the logo ‘Aruhiba’ and ‘Made in Aruba’. Petrochi considers ‘Aruhiba’ a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars.

The company sells international cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and get 1 free for \$35.00. Located at the Historic Dutch



Windmill from 9am to 8pm. Open on Sunday. And also at Tamarijn: open 9am - 5pm and Sunday from 9am to 1pm. The only place to get Aruhiba and all major credit cards accepted. We have homemade and best premium Cuban Cigars. All cigars are legal through costum. Call 586-7833 or 593-6177. Open for tour operators and we have a large parking space. Come and see Mr. Petrochi rolling the cigars everyday.



At the Crystal Theater

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“Havana Dance” is the biggest stage production in the Caribbean, featuring Cuban dancers and entertainers directly from Havana. The show delivers a purely Cuban spectacle, with a cast of 12 female ballerinas, 4 male dancers, 2 singers and 3 acrobats, performing a fresh program accompanied by live Cuban music performed on stage by a genuine Cuban orchestra, consisting of 5 professional Cuban musicians. This live dance AND live music combination as seen in our pictures, is ‘first of its kind’ on the island.

While the greater part of the “Havana Dance” review enjoys predominantly Cuban flavor, the show is graced with a truly unique Caribbean choreography, and many tropical touches. “Havana Dance” unfolds on a two-tiered stage, with entrances and exits to and off the arena at different heights, which presents a



new visual concept. The custom-designed costumes are sensual, daring, colorful, and luxurious and set “Havana Dance” apart from any other cabaret. Producer Steve Hudson who enjoyed an unprecedentedly-successful seven-year run with his previous “Let’s Go Latin” review, conceived and created an exciting and much-evolved new must-see spectacle. Tickets for “Havana Dance” are US\$ 49.- Children under 12 pay US\$25.- Tickets are available at the theater box office, Renaissance Aruba Resort, and can also be purchased

at the concierge’s desk at the Renaissance Aruba Resort. Other ticket vendors include the De Palm Tours and Pelican Adventure Activity Centers at the resorts. A special dinner & show package is also available in conjunction with the L.G. Smith’s Steak & Chop House for US\$89.- per person. For additional information and reservations call the Crystal Theatre at Tel.: 583 6000, ext. 6115, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. After 5 p.m., call tel.: 583 6000 ext. 6357. Don’t miss an opportunity to be greatly entertained by the sizzle of “Havana Dance.” □





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PALM BEACH - Recently at the Westin Resort vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at the Westin Resort they call their home away from home. Constantine & Effiet were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 23 years.

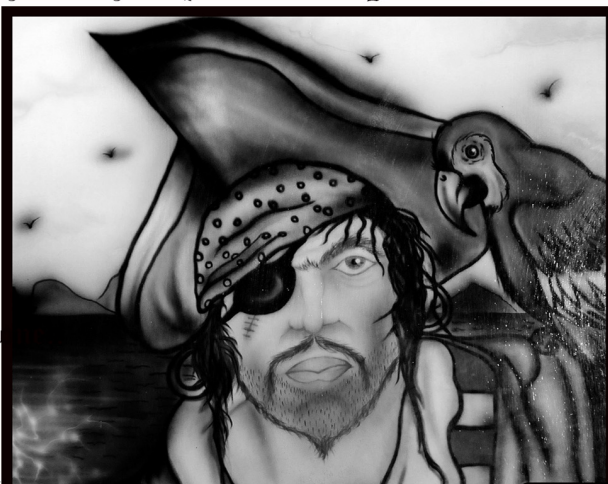


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The idea behind the Bread Boutique is pretty simple, really: bake warm breads continuously, make hearty soups from scratch every day and when they're finished, they're finished--come back tomorrow, see what we've got--serve only crisp and flavorful salads, stuff sandwiches and wraps with fresh veggies, make free WI-FI available, offer a variety of mix and match food combos, serve breakfast nonstop, brew fresh coffee in small batches, price everything reasonably and always offer small and delicious treats for dessert.

No wonder the Bread Boutique is as popular as it is.

Ok, one more prominent feature, owner Fernando, possible the most congenial, friendly, and accommodating man on the planet. And his hand-picked staff, they are living, breathing sandwich making gems.

And the painting on the walls lending the friendly dining room a splash of color are by Carina, Fernando's artist wife, and they are for sale, should you decide to get the painting to go along with your sandwich.



Open for breakfast and lunch and snacks in between, weekdays from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Bread Boutique just introduced a new service, office delivery. Fernando is proud to say that the Aruba

Hotel & Tourism Association, and Aruba's phone service provider Setar, even the staff at McDonald's--yes the Micky D's people--order their lunch in, from the Bread Boutique.



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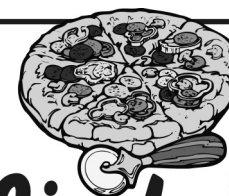
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UNESCO to retain support despite new country status

MAHO--In light of the new constitutional status for the Netherlands Antilles, United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Caribbean Director Kwame Boafa has guaranteed continued cooperation considering the necessity to develop national commissions.

Boafa said this during the opening remarks of a two-day UNESCO meeting that rounded off Friday. Leader of Government Commissioner Sarah Wescot-Williams stated her concerns about just that matter.

She wanted to know what would happen to the UNESCO offices in St. Maarten and Curaçao as of

January 2010.

Much of the focus of the meeting was on giving advice to St. Maarten on how it could restructure its position with UNESCO, in seeking separate membership. This will constitute the additional responsibility for UNESCO of having at least one more national commission added in the region. St. Maarten has had UNESCO membership for 25 years up to now.

Wescot-Williams asked UNESCO representatives present during Thursday's opening session to consider future cooperation despite the constitutional transformation.

In terms of a UNESCO building for St. Maarten, she stated that St. Maarten

was running behind, as it did not have the infrastructure and logistics for many of the offices that represent regional and international organisations.

Curaçao's UNESCO Secretary General Marva Braune echoed the sentiments relating to the need for continued cooperation between the islands after the constitutional change, stating that much brainstorming would continue to keep the

communication lines open.

Also attending the meeting were Education Minister Omayra Leeflang, Foreign Relations representatives of the Netherlands Antilles, UNESCO representatives from Saba, St. Eustatius and Curaçao, and local Sector Education representatives.

A target date has been set in September for another seminar that will focus on the introduction of media and technology in education,

particularly presenting the islands of the Netherlands Antilles as a multilingual community.

A cultural evening for the delegates was held at John Larmonie Centre, with various presentations, including a song by pupils of the Seventh Day Adventist School, a steel pan rendition by Ebony Steel Orchestra, an instrumental on the violin, a dance, a skit, a sign language recital and poetry.

Own this Garden!



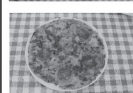
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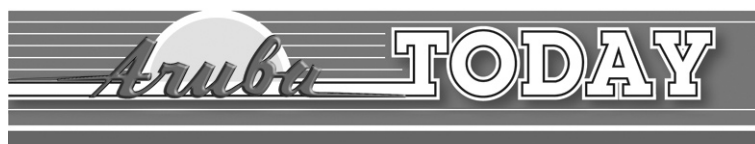
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Why my students asked Obama to play chess with them

By Lisa Suhay

Norfolk, Va. – Six months of chess in the classroom as a learning platform transformed 40 of my students, many of whom are labeled “underachievers,” from victims into victors – at no cost to the taxpayer or school. Now that success is at risk because of the ailing economy.

Too often “private school” is automatically associated with well-heeled students and a posh environment. In reality, many tiny private schools exist to serve students who have been left behind by harsh, large public school classes due to a wide variety of issues ranging from sheer sensitive brilliance to serious family issues. Like many public schools these private schools often struggle to meet the needs of their students.

Our small private school, for example, is little more than four walls; no computers in the classrooms and blue-collar families working multiple jobs to educate their children. Our children come from single-parent families and many students work after school to pay their own tuition. It’s the same story at hundreds of schools across the nation.

I teach five totally different classes each day: American government, English composition, British literature, journalism, and creative writing while earning less than \$16,000 a year before taxes. I obviously love this job at Ryan Academy High School and find the challenge of pushing students to learn important, to say the least.

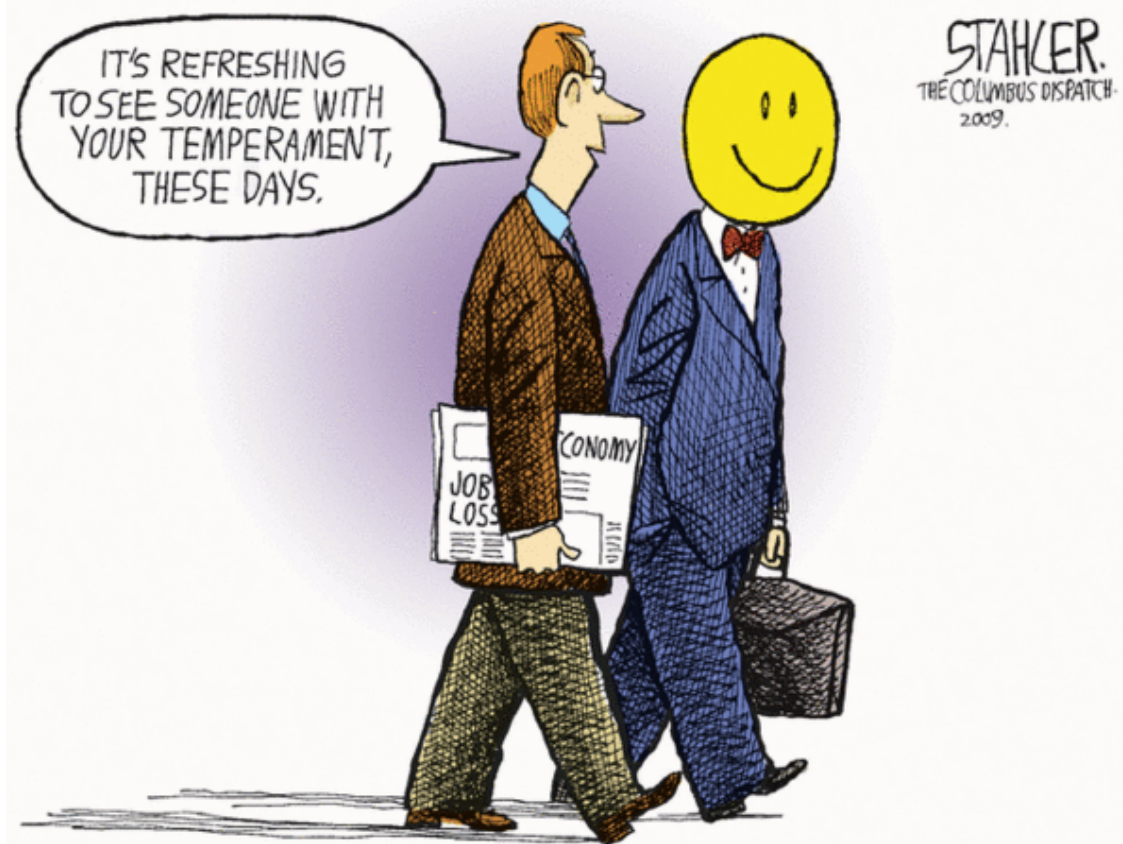
While schools nationwide cool their fiscal jets and big businesses retool their corporate jets, teachers everywhere are learning to make educational bricks without straw. To connect with the unique minds in my classes, I had to step out of the box and onto the chess board.

And it worked.

My students successfully solicited free chess sets and learning materials from: The Hip-Hop Chess Federation (HHCF), The US Chess Trust, the Josh Waitzkin Foundation, The House of Staunton, and the Virginia Scholastic Chess Association. Intel may even be sending a laptop so students can play online for chess scholarships.

The only other classroom using Hip-Hop Chess – which stresses unity, life strategy, and nonviolence in the classroom – for daily teaching, is John J. O’Connell High School in San Francisco. Both have seen students transform from underachievers (in some cases juvenile delinquents) to students eager to learn and think.

Every one of my students learned to play chess this year. What’s more, they all began to think more clearly and often, and think before they acted. Achievers blossomed and borderline drop-outs are now making the honor roll and are seriously thinking about college and jobs that do not involve fries or result in an orange jumpsuit and leg irons.



ANGRY AMERICANS MAY BE READY TO LOOK AT INCOME INEQUALITY

By Cynthia Tucker

It took a lot to drive average Americans into a torrent of populist outrage, ready to tar and feather executives of American International Group and other greedy financiers who brought the world economy to the brink of collapse and then dared to demand outrageous compensation for their work. Given that regular stiffes have been struggling for decades, it’s a wonder that anger took so long to build.

While Wall Street bonuses may have reached the apex of absurdity in the last decade or so, CEO compensation has been out of whack for much longer than that. In 1965, CEOs earned 24 times the pay of the average worker; by 2007, the factor was 275 times. Even CEOs who wrecked their companies were rewarded lavishly when they left. Meanwhile, most workers didn’t share in the wealth produced by productivity gains in the 1990s. Their health care costs soared; their unions weakened; class divisions hardened. These days, it’s not as easy for young men and women to rise above their parents’ means as popular mythology suggests.

The typical worker might have noticed the growing income inequality -- and protested -- earlier. But easy credit helped Americans maintain comfortable lifestyles, concealing the effect of stagnating wages.

Besides, conservative commentators had convinced many that if you weren’t rich, it was your own fault. They denounced concerns about the income gap as “class warfare”; they dismissed any suggestion that greedy CEOs needed to be reined in; they lauded unbridled capitalism as man’s salvation.

That era is now officially over. And good riddance. (Well, mostly over. In some quarters, the kneejerk impulse to excuse fat cats their misdeeds remains so strong that some conservative commentators have tried to blame the financial meltdown on working-class homebuyers. Not a single mainstream economist agrees with that assessment. It’s pretty clear that shenigans at companies like AIG are to blame for this mess.)

However, it’s not yet clear what we’ll do with the lessons we’ve learned. For example, will we harness this righteous anger to adopt long-needed initiatives

to stem income inequality?

This isn’t a plea for handouts for the incompetent or lazy. Nor is it a naive belief that government should ensure equal outcomes. It’s a call for a clear-eyed look at social mobility, without rose-colored glasses.

A few years ago, Earl Wysong of Indiana University and two colleagues published a study on social mobility in this country. As outlined in the Economist, a right-leaning British news magazine, they “compared the incomes of 2,749 father-and-son pairs from 1979 to 1998 and found that few sons had moved up the class ladder. Nearly 70 percent of the sons in 1998 had remained at the same level or were doing worse than their fathers in 1979. The greatest social mobility occurred in those families already at the top of the income ladder,” the magazine reported.

In other words, America doesn’t level the playing field as well as popular culture suggests. With the decline of the nation’s manufacturing sector, the great engine of economic equality is sputtering. Jobs that gave high school graduates a good middle-class lifestyle, with health care and pensions, are dying, with nothing to replace them.

You need look no further than the nation’s military to see the class distinctions. While affluent Americans send their sons and daughters to college, the all-volunteer armed forces have become increasingly dependent on young men and women from working-class homes, usually those earning under \$40,000 a year. While many of those volunteers felt the tug of duty and patriotism, others joined for health care and college aid. Those young men and women deserve to have other routes to economic stability.

The United States is still a country of great opportunity, as the Obamas would surely attest. Neither Barack nor Michelle Robinson Obama grew up in comfort; but with hard work, each of them rose to achieve an Ivy League education.

But countless other young Americans are struggling to climb just one or two rungs up the ladder of social and economic mobility. We ought to harness our righteous indignation to find a way to reward that effort.

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dinning room or outside on the terrace to enjoy the tropical breeze and daily live music. Most guests come in early for the **daily fresh catches**, such as Red snapper, grouper, mahi mahi, wahoo and tuna. Check with the server to find out about the Catch of the day. The chef will be more than happy to prepare your fish the way you like it best: grilled, deep-fried, pan-fried or the chef's choice. **Every Wednesday, seafood specials are prepared** depending on what the Fishermen bring in fresh out of the water that afternoon. These



specials usually include fresh Caribbean lobster and pounds of peeled shrimps. **Fishes and More** is for everyone, from large groups, families, couples and even singles who can't shake the seafood addiction can stop in for a fix of Pina Colada Shrimp. For those who like to try something different or have had their fill of spectacular seafood, the chef prepares a wonderful array of filet mignon, rib eye, wiener schnitzel, veal parmesan, and pasta specialties. **Great Seafood!!!** Fun and relaxed atmosphere. Right across from the high rise hotels. It is worth the short walk to a wonderful dinner ☐



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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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President Barack Obama, accompanied by, from left, Economic Adviser Christina Romer, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, and Economic Adviser Lawrence Summers, walks from the Oval Office to the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, March 18, 2009, to make remarks on AIG, prior to departing for a trip to California.

Associated Press

Obama implies rejection of House bonus tax plan

By STEVEN R. HURST
Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) —

President Barack Obama waged significant political capital Sunday, signaling opposition to a highly popular congressional drive to slap a punitive 90 percent tax on bonuses to big earners at financial institutions already deeply in debt to taxpayers. Obama defended his stand by saying the tax, passed quickly in the House of Representatives last week, would be unconstitutional and that he would not “govern out of anger.” He declared his determination, nevertheless, to make Wall Street understand it must shed “the old way of doing business.”

In a wide ranging interview broadcast Sunday night, Obama also acknowledged surprise at how quickly the U.S. economy crumbled between his November election and January inauguration.

“I don’t think that we anticipated how steep the decline would be,” he said in the “60 Minutes” interview on CBS television.

“That slope is a lot steeper than anything that we’ve said — we’ve seen before.”

There was considerable political risk attached to Obama’s implied rejection of the 90 percent tax measure. It raced through the House of Representatives as lawmakers responded to a wave of American anger over bonus payments to American International Group Inc. employees.

A week ago, the company paid out at least \$165 million in bonuses even though taxpayers were keeping the insurance giant afloat with a \$170 billion government bailout.

While questioning the legality and constitutionality of the House measure, Obama said he expected the Senate would produce a much different and acceptable version of the bill — one that he could sign.

In a portion of the interview taped in the Oval Office, Obama issued his standard and optimistic long-term prognosis for the economy, but responded, “Yes,” when asked if “the financial system could still

implode if you had a big failure at AIG or at Citicorp?”

And the president explained that he felt caught in a balancing act, trying to assuage taxpayer anger at Wall Street with the need for support from the financial sector for his attempts to stop the country from plunging into fiscal turmoil unseen since the 1930s Great Depression.

“

I think that you’ve got a pretty egregious situation here (bonus payments) that people are understandably upset about,” he said in the interview taped on Friday. “And so let’s see if there are ways of doing this that are both legal, that are constitutional — that uphold our basic principles of fairness, but don’t hamper us from getting the banking system — back on track.”

Earlier Sunday, Jared Berets, Vice President Joe Biden’s economic adviser, previewed Obama’s opposition to the AIG tax plan, saying it “may be a dangerous way to go.”

Continued on next page



Firefighters hose on a FedEx cargo plane after it crashed and burst into flames Monday on landing amid heavy winds at Narita International Airport in Narita, east of Tokyo, Monday, March 23, 2009. A pilot and co-pilot were aboard but their safety could not immediately be confirmed.

Associated Press

Cargo plane crashes on landing at Tokyo airport

TOKYO (AP) — A FedEx cargo plane crashed early Monday morning amid heavy winds at Tokyo’s international airport and burst into flames. The pilot and copilot were taken to a hospital, and a local TV station reported they were both confirmed dead.

The flight from Guangzhou China crashed onto a runway at Narita Airport and was immediately swarmed by firefighters and rescuers. The pilot and copilot — the only people onboard the flight — were extracted from the cockpit and brought to a local hospital, according to airport spokeswoman Misuho Fukuda.

TV Asahi reported that both had been confirmed dead. Television footage showed the plane bounce and then burst into flames as it skidded to a halt on the runway. The twisted remains of the plane were still smoking hours after the crash.

The plane smashed into the longer of Narita’s two runways, which remained closed Monday morning with all incoming flights diverted, Fukuda said.

Local news reports said the plane was an MD-11. Strong winds and turbulence have caused other recent incidents at the airport. Last month a flight from the Philippines was jolted by severe turbulence as it circled prior to landing, injuring 50 passengers and crew members. Narita Airport is a major international hub located about 35 miles east of central Tokyo. It is Japan’s second-busiest airport, after Haneda Airport, which is also in Tokyo.

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Obama

Continued from front page

And White House economic adviser Austen Goolsbee said his boss understood the nation's anger and that the easiest thing would be for AIG executives to return the bonuses. "He's going to look at what comes out of the House, what comes out of the Senate, see what ideas we have," Goolsbee said.

Obama used the CBS interview to yet again defend Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and his plans to resuscitate the ailing financial system.

After appearing blind-sided by and wrong-footed last week in its response to millions of dollars in bonus payments, Geithner was set on Monday to detail plans to use \$100 billion in federal bailout funds to leverage as much as \$1 trillion in so-called toxic assets off the books of endangered banks.

Christina Romer, a top Obama economic adviser, said Sunday that Geithner would achieve that goal using part of what remains in the \$700 billion financial rescue package to entice private investors to buy the bad assets and hold them until the system recovers. She said the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. would inject more capital as well, but did not specify how much.

The goal: Thawing the frozen



Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., ranking Republican on the Senate Budget Committee, left, questions Budget Director Peter Orszag on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, March 10, 2009, during the committee's hearing on President Barack Obama's fiscal 2010 federal budget. Committee Chairman Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D. is at right.

Associated Press

credit system which has been denying loans to businesses and consumers, compounding the country's deep recession. Romer said Geithner was laying out one more piece of the administration's plan to revive the collapsing economy, and that she did not expect the message to trigger the same kind of stock market plunge that greeted the treasury secretary's original discussion of the plan on Feb. 10. The Dow Jones industrial average shed 380 points as investors expressed disappointment about a lack of details. Meanwhile, Republican Sen. Judd Gregg predicted Obama's ambitious \$3.6 trillion budget, including massive spending to

save the economy, would put the country into bankruptcy and would never pass Congress.

"The practical implications of this is bankruptcy for the United States. There's no other way around it," Gregg said. "If we maintain the proposals which are in this budget over the 10-year period that this budget covers, this country will go bankrupt. People will not buy our debt; our dollar will become devalued."

Gregg, however, joined Obama in defending Geithner and agreed with the president's apparent rejection of the House measure to tax bonuses.

Immigrants fearful English classes could be cut

By DEEPTI HAJELA

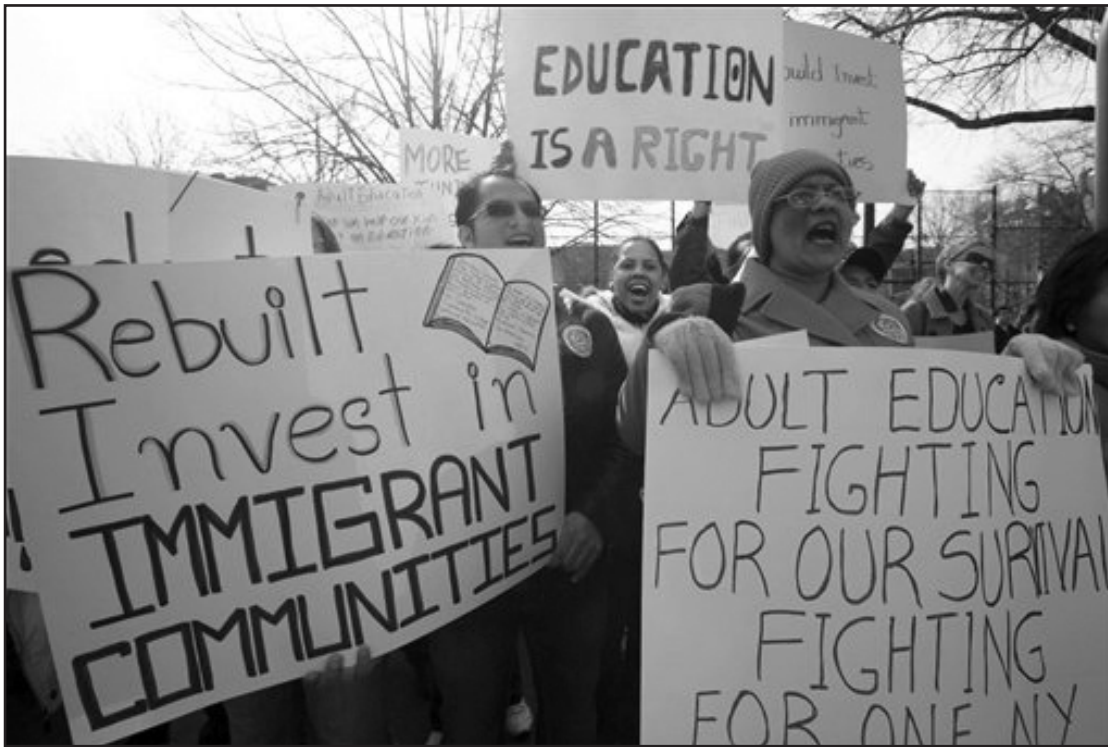
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Farzana Morshed arrived from Bangladesh three years ago without any real grasp of English. Her husband had to help her open a bank account, an interpreter was necessary when she needed medical care and she couldn't go anywhere by herself for fear of getting lost.

Morshed soon got the language lessons she needed through her local library and a community-based nonprofit organization, and her English is now good enough that she can work as an interpreter at a hospital.

But other immigrants around the country are worried that they won't have the same chance as Morshed because states are slashing budgets for adult literacy classes — an important lifeline in immigrant communities.

The New York state budget



Immigrants and their supporters demonstrate during a rally to protest New York city cuts to programs that teach English as a second language, Wednesday, March 18, 2009 in New York.

Associated Press

proposed by Gov. David Paterson would cut three programs that contain an English education component. The proposed budget takes funding for the three programs

from nearly \$13 million down to \$8.6 million, a cut of about 33 percent.

At the city level, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's budget proposal doesn't include

two City Council streams of funding that support teaching English, said Anthony Ng, deputy director of policy and advocacy at United Neighborhood Houses. Those programs currently receive almost \$7 million.

It's an issue in other parts of the country as well, said Margie McHugh, co-director of the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy at the Migration Policy Institute. She said there is great concern in several states that budget shortfalls will cause cutbacks in adult literacy programs, noting that it already has happened in California.

Immigrants in New York hope the money will be restored by the time the state and city budgets are finalized. The city programs also were not included in Bloomberg's proposals in previous years, but they were added in during the budget process, Ng said, although not at the funding levels advocates hoped to see.

At a rally Wednesday at a park in the Jackson Heights section of the borough of Queens, immigrants spoke out against the funding cuts and carried signs reading "Rebuild, Invest in Adult Literacy" and "More Education for Parents, Better Future for Children."

Among them was Gustavo Medina, 72, wearing a top hat

his granddaughter made for him that said "We Want To Learn."

The Colombian immigrant has been taking English classes for the past year, and hopes enough funding will be there for another year. He works cleaning restaurants at John F. Kennedy International Airport and learning English would help him find a better job with a better income.

And that, he said, would be good for the country, since a higher income would have him pay more in taxes. "If I learn English, more money for Uncle Sam," he said.

Advocates say the resources for teaching English to immigrants already are vastly outstripped by demand. At the Shorefront YM-YWHA of Brighton Beach in Brooklyn, several hundred students are taking English classes at any given time and easily that many more are on a waiting list.

Susan Fox, executive director of Shorefront, said immigrants are eager to learn English, recognizing how vital it is not only for economic advancement but to be fully engaged in life in the United States.

"Every cut in the adult literacy world will mean fewer people helped," she said.

In California, those cuts are a reality. Adult education there is run through two systems, community colleges and programs administered by school districts, said Matthew Smith, president of the California Council of Adult Education.

The recently approved state budget cut funds for adult education run by school districts by 15 percent and an additional 5 percent cut is coming, he said. Also, whatever funds districts do receive can be used at their discretion, so they could decide to use the money to plug holes in their kindergarten to high school programs and not fund adult programs at all, Smith said.

"It is that bad here," he said. Immigrants and advocates say the need for language classes is especially important during

U.S. officials plead for volunteers as flood sets in

By DAVE KOLPACK

Associated Press Writer

FARGO, North Dakota (AP) — Officials in Fargo and Minnesota issued urgent pleas for volunteers to help with sandbagging as a storm on Sunday increased the threat of flood in an area already expected to be swamped by a record river crest.

"We need this help," Cass County Sheriff Paul Laney said. "We need to stay calm, we need to stay cool, but we need to get serious and get this done."

The National Weather Service said the Red River was about 3 feet above flood stage Sunday in Fargo and more water was on the way. The river was expected to crest between 39 feet and 41 feet in the Fargo-Moorhead area by Friday, a day earlier and a foot higher than projected.

City officials originally planned to fill more than 1 million sandbags but now believe they need nearly 1.9 million bags to protect neighborhoods that would be affected by the new projections. About 400,000 to 500,000 bags must be filled each day to reach the goal by the end of the week, officials said.

The Minnesota National Guard

said Sunday that more than 200 soldiers would be heading to the Red River Valley to help with the flood fight. The North Dakota National Guard said about 250 members were ready.

Even so, Fargo Mayor Dennis Walaker asked for help from residents as rain began falling Sunday outside City Hall.

"What we want to do is avoid any kind of chaos," Walaker said. "This is a system where everybody works very hard to provide organization to this process."

Across the river, Moorhead Mayor Mark Voxland said he did not think the two cities were ready for a flood that could top the record crest of 39.6 feet in 1997.

Laney said 25 inmates from the Cass County jail would be filling sandbags overnight, and Fargo high school students were being released if they wanted to help. The North Dakota State football team signed up to fill bags.

Sandbags were being placed in garages Sunday night to prevent freezing in particularly vulnerable neighborhoods where about 700 homes needed protection, Walaker said.



Sandbags are lined up outside a city utility building in Fargo, N.D., Saturday, March 21, 2009, in preparation for what could be record flooding in the Red River Valley. Associated Press

"You can't place frozen sandbags. They're just like rocks, and they leak like sieves," Walaker said.

Officials also said a dike protecting downtown Fargo was being raised to about 43 feet and an emergency levee south of the city was being completed. They said 80 percent of the work had been complete.

City officials said they planned to issue calls to residents to help with diking in nearby areas.

In Afghanistan, U.S. military's 'Help Wanted' sign



In this March 18, 2009 file photo, Defense Secretary Robert Gates speaks to reporters during a news briefing at the Pentagon in Washington.

Associated Press

By ANNE FLAHERTY
Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON (AP)

— The military buildup in Afghanistan is stoking a surge of private security contractors despite a string of deadly shootings in Iraq in recent years that has called into

question the government's ability to manage the guns for hire.

In recent online postings, the military has asked private security companies to protect traveling convoys and guard U.S. bases in troubled southern provinces such as Helmand

and Kandahar. And if truckers hired to transport fuel for the military want protection, they can hire their own armed guards, the military says.

The Bush administration expanded the use of such companies with the onset of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan because it can save the military time and money. But the practice lost much of its appeal with Congress after September 2007, when five guards with what was then called Blackwater Worldwide (the company recently changed its name to Xe) opened fire in a crowded Baghdad square and killed 17 Iraqis.

Those killings followed a 2006 incident in which a drunken Blackwater employee fatally shot an Iraqi politician's bodyguard.

Now, as President Barack Obama plans to send more U.S. personnel to Afghanistan to boost security and diplomatic efforts, more contractors are preparing to deploy, too.

Still, serious questions remain as to how these private forces are managed, when they can use deadly force and what happens if they break the rules.

"We understand the difficulty of providing for the security of the Department of Defense facilities," Sen. Carl Levin, Democratic chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, wrote Defense Secretary Robert Gates on Dec. 9. "However, the proposed contract would appear to dramatically expand the use of private security contractors in Afghanistan," Levin said, adding that the reliance on contractors in Iraq resulted in "widespread abuses."

Levin wrote to Gates after The Washington Post reported on the contract bid for armed guards at U.S. bases in southern Afghanistan.

In his letter, he noted the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, which warns the Defense Department against outsourcing security operations "in uncontrolled or unpredictable high-threat environments."

Complicating matters is that the armed guards hired in Afghanistan most likely won't be U.S. citizens. According to Gates, only nine out of the 3,847 security contractors in Afghanistan have U.S. passports.

Some lawmakers worry that arming non-U.S. citizens to protect American bases or convoys poses a security risk in a country rife with corruption and on the defensive against the militant Taliban.

Gates defended the practice in his Feb. 17 response to Levin. "The use of contractor security personnel is vital to supporting the forward-operating bases in certain parts of the country and in continuing our efforts to employ local nationals whenever possible," the Pentagon chief said.

Former presidential candidate Sen. John McCain, the top Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, agrees.

"If Afghans are qualified to do jobs, we want them to do jobs," McCain said in an

interview.

Despite Gates' assurances, Levin said in a statement to the Associated Press that he would "continue to actively review the issue and to consider the need for legislation."

But so far, Congress has struggled to close even the most glaring of legal loopholes governing security contractors in war zones.

While the law says U.S. courts have jurisdiction over defense contractors working in a war zone, it leaves in question those supporting other agencies, such as the Blackwater guards hired by the State Department and involved in the Baghdad shooting.

In October 2007, the House of Representatives voted 389-30 to give U.S. courts jurisdiction over all contractors in a war zone. But momentum on the bill stalled after the Bush administration raised objections. The Senate version of the bill, introduced by Barack Obama when he was an Illinois senator, never received a vote.

Last month, two sponsors of the bill, Democratic Reps. David Price and Jan Schakowsky, asked President Obama in a letter to pick up where he left off by helping Congress define which tasks only government should perform.

There are 71,700 contractors in Afghanistan, which is more than twice the number of U.S. troops. With more than 3,000 of those contractors carrying weapons, the Defense Department established an office to oversee them.

That office, known as the "armed contractor oversight directorate," just agreed to pay \$993,000 to Aegis Defense Services, a London-based security and risk management company, to help do that job. Gates assured Levin that the military's contract with Aegis would not result in contractors overseeing contractors.

Instead, the nearly \$1 million dollar deal would provide administrative support only and that the company's workers would not have "direct input into daily operations, force protection, or combat operations," Gates said.

Lots of ham on the menu at annual Gridiron Dinner

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama didn't have time to join a roast of prominent officials by the journalists who cover them, cracks Vice President Joe Biden, because Obama is getting ready for Easter. "He thinks it's about him," Biden says. No, that's not the reason, counters California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. "He's just not that into you," he said, referring to the book and recent movie with that title.

Obama may not be the messiah or even stuck-up, but he is the first president in decades to skip the Gridiron Club dinner during his first year in office.

Instead, the president spent Saturday night at the Camp David presidential retreat in the Maryland mountains with his family. He missed out on the 124th annual event in which journalists use jokes and songs to skewer politicians — a few of whom get to throw back some jabs of their own.

"Here you were expecting 'Yes we can,'" Schwarzenegger, a Republican, said during the festivities at a downtown hotel ballroom. "And instead what did you get? 'Hasta la vista, baby,'" reprising a line from his "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" film.

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm said that former vice presidential candidate Sarah

Palin, the governor of Alaska, "really set back the cause of hot governors."

Then, with an eye on Pennsylvania's chief executive, Granholm added: "You know where I'm coming from, Ed Rendell."

The Democrat also took a shot at Schwarzenegger, asking which of his movies best prepared him to deal with his fellow Republicans: "True Lies" or "Kindergarten Cop"?

Much of the evening's dark humor focused on the financial crisis.

Biden said that Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, in attendance for the event, is "always there when you need money, no questions asked."

In a send-up of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, an impersonator sang "Imperial Girl" to the tune of Madonna's "Material Girl."

The journalists-turned-entertainers, wearing silly costumes and accompanied by the United States Marine Band, also took a few final swipes at the previous administration.

A spoof of former Vice President Dick Cheney set to the tune of Frank Sinatra's "My Way" made fun of Cheney's dominant role in George W. Bush's White House. The Cheney mimic sang, "I pulled the strings, he said the words ... he did it my way."

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FAA: Children among 17 dead in Montana plane crash

BUTTE, Montana (AP) — A small plane crashed Sunday as it approached an airport in Montana, killing 17 people, including several children, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman said.

The single engine turboprop plane crashed about 500 feet from the airport in Butte while attempting to land, said spokesman Mike Fergus. The Montana Standard reported in an online story that it crashed in Butte's Holy Cross Cemetery.

The aircraft had departed from Oroville, California, and the pilot had filed a flight plan showing a destination of Bozeman, about 85 miles southeast of Butte. But the pilot canceled his flight plan at some point and headed for Butte, Fergus said.

Preliminary reports indicate the dead include numerous children, he said. There were no known fatalities on the ground, he added.

"We think that it was probably a ski trip for the kids," Fergus said.

The plane was registered to Eagle Cap Leasing Inc. in Enterprise, Oregon, Fergus said. He didn't know who was operating the plane.

Calls to local authorities were not immediately returned. Witnesses told the Standard that they saw the plane go into a nosedive into the cemetery.

Martha and Steve Guidoni, who were at a gas station across from the cemetery, said the plane "just nosedived into the ground."

"My husband went over there to see if he could do anything," Martha Guidoni said.

Fergus said the Pilatus PC-12 aircraft was manufactured in 2001.

I. Felkamp is listed as Eagle Cap's president in Oregon

corporate records. Attempts to reach Felkamp by phone were unsuccessful.

In California, Tom Hagler said he saw a group of about a dozen children and four adults Sunday morning at the Oroville Municipal Airport, about 70 miles north of Sacramento.

Hagler, owner of Table Mountain Aviation, described the children as ranging from about 6- to 10 year olds. He let the children into his building to use the restroom.

"There were a lot of kids in the group," he said. "A lot of really cute kids."

Hagler said he showed the pilot where he could fill up on fuel, and the pilot said he expected his flight to take two-and-a-half hours. The pilot didn't file a flight plan at the Oroville airport.

National Transportation Safety Board spokesman Keith Holloway said its investigators were expected to arrive in Butte late Sunday or early Monday.

The incident was the country's third major plane crash this year. All 155 people onboard survived after a US



In this picture provided by Martha Guidoni via The Montana Standard, a fire burns inside the Holy Cross Cemetery after a small, single-engine plane crashed in an area just south of the Bert Mooney Airport in Butte, Mont. on Sunday, March 22, 2009. Seventeen people, including several children, were killed in the incident, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Associated Press

Airways jetliner landed in New York's Hudson River in January when a flock of geese disabled both engines, and a commuter plane fell on a house in a suburb of Buffalo, New York, killing all 49 passengers and a man in the home in February.

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Pope decries African wars at Mass for 1 million

By VICTOR L. SIMPSON

Associated Press Writer

LUANDA, Angola (AP) — Pope Benedict XVI celebrated Mass for the largest gathering of his African pilgrimage Sunday, telling a crowd on the outskirts of this seaside capital that reconciliation on the war-ravaged continent would come only with a “change of heart, a new way of thinking.”

The Vatican said as many as 1 million people turned out on the dusty field near a cement factory to hear the pope at the last major event of his seven-day trip, which began Tuesday in Cameroon.

Speaking from a tented pink altar, the pope said evils in Africa had “reduced the poor to slavery and deprived future generations of the resources needed to create a more solid and just society.”

“How true it is that war can destroy everything of value,” said Benedict, wearing a pink cape and mopping his sweaty brow with a white handkerchief kept inside his sleeve.

Later he was scheduled to meet with representatives of women’s rights groups to praise the role of women in African society.

Angolans have been enslaved, subjugated and at war almost nonstop since Portuguese colonizers brought the first Catholic missionaries in 1491.



Pope Benedict XVI arrives in the popemobile to celebrate a mass Sunday, March 22, 2009, on the outskirts of Angola’s seaside capital, Luanda, the last major event before the end of the visit on Monday. Pope Benedict XVI is in Africa for a seven-day trip to visit Cameroon and Angola.

Associated Press

Many of the slaves taken to Brazil, for example, came from Angola.

The Catholic Church was an ally of the colonizers who discriminated against the people until independence from Portugal in 1975, when civil war erupted, in part fueled by the country’s oil and diamond wealth.

Some 15,000 died, including missionaries, before the war ended in 2002, and the scars still are evident among the many people who lost limbs in one of the most heavily mined countries in the world.

A Marxist revolution also

has left scars, though the country’s president for 30 years, Eduardo dos Santos, abandoned communism and improved relations with the church starting in the late 1980s.

Critics say last year’s massive election victory was marred by fraud and corruption and that the pope must beware of allowing his visit, sponsored by the state, to be seen as legitimizing an authoritarian regime. The bishops in Angola twice have denounced the government for leaving its people mired in poverty while leaders enrich themselves off

oil and diamonds.

Since he arrived on Friday from Cameroon, the pope has met with dos Santos and spoken out against corruption in Africa, the continent with the fastest-growing Catholic population in the world.

Before he said Mass on Sunday, Benedict clasped his hands, as if in prayer, and offered his condolences to the families of two 20-year-old women trampled to death in a stampede at a Luanda stadium before a youth event he addressed on Saturday.

He also wished a speedy

recovery to some 40 people injured in the crush. Dozens of others collapsed and were treated at the site for heat exhaustion.

Later, the Vatican’s No. 2 official, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, blessed the bodies of the two victims, laid out under white sheets at Josina Machel Hospital. Accompanied by Angola’s Foreign Minister Assuncao Dos Anjos, the cardinal visited with injured victims.

State radio appealed to people to take water and food to Sunday’s Mass. People also carried parasols and stools amid the hooting cars and motorbikes making their way to see the pope. Some men hoisted children onto their shoulders and mothers strapped babies to their backs.

Even before he landed in Africa, the pope provoked protests after he told reporters on his chartered Alitalia jet that condoms were not the answer to Africa’s severe AIDS epidemic, suggesting that sexual behavior was the issue.

He condemned sexual violence against women, but also chided the 45 African countries including Angola that have approved abortion in cases of rape or incest or when a mother’s life is in danger.

Sudan scholars urge president to stay home

By MOHAMED OSMAN

Associated Press Writer

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — Sudan’s Islamic scholars have issued a religious edict calling on the president not to travel to an Arab summit because of the international warrant against him on war crimes charges, state media reported Sunday.

The scholar’s fatwa, a nonbinding religious opinion, joins increasing calls in Africa’s largest nation for President Omar al-Bashir to skip the summit in Qatar at the end of this month for fear of an attempt to implement the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court.

“The enemies would like to see us split and thrown to the four winds, and if you are harmed then the whole nation would be affected,” the scholars argued in their fatwa.

“From a Sharia (Islamic law) standpoint, you must not travel abroad,” they added, saying it was part of their role as Islamic scholars to advise the president on matters that affect the lives of Muslims in the country.

On March 4, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for al-Bashir on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur, a

vast arid region in Sudan’s west where a civil war has claimed up to 300,000 lives and displaced 2.7 million people.

Only a few Arab countries are signatories to the ICC bound by its rules, and the Arab League has publicly stated that al-Bashir would be welcome to the March 27 summit to be held in Doha, the Qatari capital. Arab League chief Amr Moussa said last week that the 22-nation group would not act on the arrest warrant.

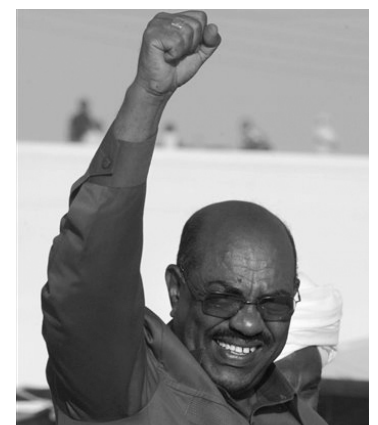
Despite the calls for him to stay home, the Sudanese president said he will attend the summit.

“I insist on taking that decision since their arrest warrant is meant to restrict my movements and put me in a prison inside Sudan,” he was quoted as saying in an interview published Saturday in the Egyptian weekly al-Osboa.

Al-Bashir caused an international outcry by expelling 13 international aid organizations from Darfur after the warrant was issued. He accused the groups of spying for the tribunal.

He said in the interview that he was ready to expel more organizations and even ambassadors if they overstepped their mandate.

Continued on page 10



Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir greets supporters in Toti (an island between Blue and White Nile rivers) in Khartoum, Sudan, Saturday, March 21, 2009 where he inaugurates a bridge between Khartoum and Toti. President Bashir has kept a hectic schedule since the ICC issued its indictment early this month.

Associated Press

China arrests Tibetan monks after attack on police

By GILLIAN WONG

Associated Press Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Police arrested nearly 100 monks after hundreds of Tibetans attacked a police station and government officials in northwestern China, state media reported. All but two of the 95 arrested Sunday were monks, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The Tibetans were arrested for their involvement in a violent protest Saturday apparently triggered by the disappearance of a Tibetan who escaped from police custody in Qinghai province, Xinhua said.

A Tibetan exile said the protest involved as many as 2,000 people and was sparked by the apparent suicide of a monk under investigation for unfurling a Tibetan flag.

Xinhua said several hundred people — including nearly 100 monks from the Ragya Monastery — attacked the police station in Ragya, a township in the Tibetan prefecture of Golog, on Saturday, assaulting policemen and government staff.

Some officials were injured slightly in the assault, Xinhua said, without elaborating.

A man who answered the phone at Qinghai's public security department said he had not heard about the attack or the arrests. Phone calls to other police departments and government offices in the area rang unanswered.

Xinhua said the unrest Saturday began after a man accused of supporting Tibetan independence escaped from police custody in Ragya and disappeared, Xinhua said.

A former resident of the area who lives in Dharmasala, India, said the protesters were angry because they believed the man, a 28-year-old monk named Tashi Sangpo, fled then committed suicide by jumping in the Yellow River.

"When Tashi was being interrogated by the officials, he asked their permission to go to the toilet. He then went out and jumped into the Yellow River," he said on condition of anonymity, citing fear of

reprisals against his family still living in China. "The dead body is yet to be found."

The exile, who said he received the information from people in Ragya, said 500 monks from the monastery protested outside the local administration office and the group swelled to about 2,000 as others from the village joined.

He said Tashi Sangpo was being investigated by police because he unfurled a Tibetan flag on the roof of the monastery on March 10, the anniversary of the start of a 1959 abortive Tibetan revolt against Chinese rule, and distributed pamphlets on the street urging unified protests against Chinese rule. The Tibetan flag is banned in China.

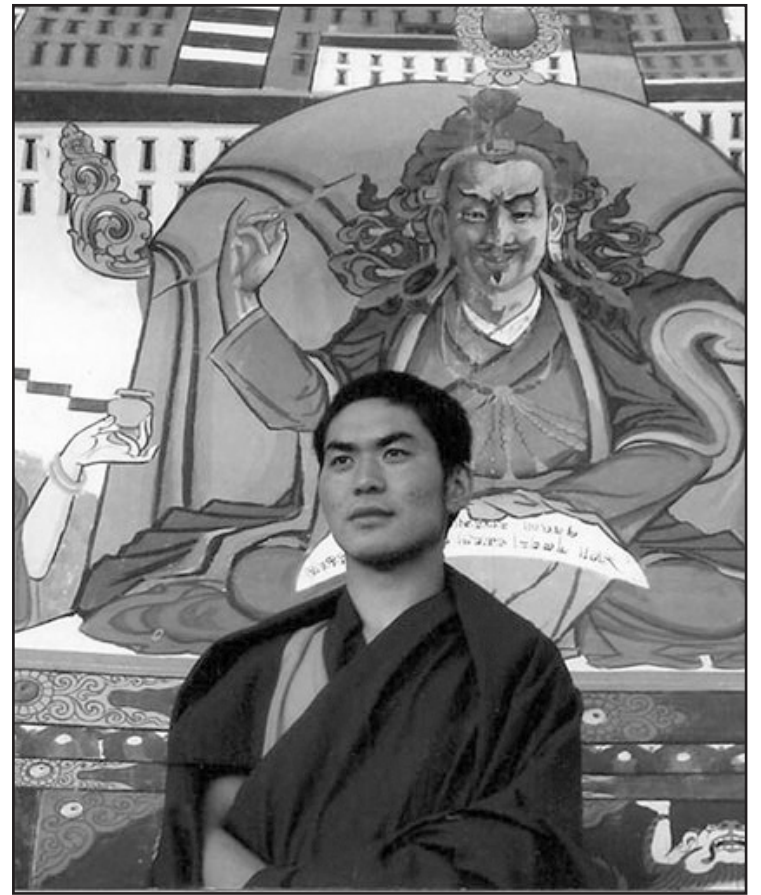
It was difficult to independently verify the account because government departments could not be reached Sunday. Communication is also spotty

in the areas and residents usually will not talk for fear of official retaliation.

Dharmasala is the seat of the Dalai Lama's self-proclaimed government-in-exile and the destination of many Tibetans who flee China.

Security in Tibetan areas has been tightened in recent weeks as Beijing tried to head off trouble ahead of sensitive anniversaries this month. March 14 marked the one-year anniversary of anti-government riots in Lhasa, Tibet's regional capital, while March 17 marked 50 years since the Dalai Lama escaped into exile in India after Chinese troops crushed the Tibetan revolt.

China claims Tibet has always been part of its territory, but many Tibetans say the Himalayan region was virtually independent for centuries and that Beijing's tight control is draining them of their culture and identity.



In this undated photo provided from an anonymous Tibetan exile to the Associated Press, Tibetan Buddhist monk Tashi Sangpo poses in an unknown place in China. Nearly 100 Tibetan monks were arrested or turned themselves in Sunday, March 22, 2009 after hundreds of protesters attacked a police station in northwest China, Xinhua reported. The former resident of the area and now living in Dharmasala, India, who provided this photo said the protesters were angry because they believed Tashi jumped in the river to commit suicide after fleeing custody at the police station.

Associated Press

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Venezuela's Chavez calls Barack Obama 'ignorant'

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez on Sunday called President Barack Obama “ignorant,” saying he has a lot to learn about Latin America. The Venezuelan leader said he had been ready to name a new ambassador in Washington when Obama took office, but put that on hold after the new U.S. president accused him of “exporting terrorism” and being an obstacle to progress in the region. “At least one could say, ‘poor ignorant person,’” Chavez said on his weekly television

and radio program, adding that Obama “should read a little bit so that he learns about ... the reality of Latin America.” U.S. National Security Council spokesman Mike Hammer declined to comment on Chavez’s statements. Chavez’s relations with Washington grew increasingly strained under former President George W. Bush. The Venezuelan president expelled the U.S. ambassador and withdrew his envoy from Washington in September. Top diplomats have yet to be restored at either embassy.

Chavez and Obama both plan to attend a summit of leaders from across the Americas next month in Trinidad and Tobago. There, Chavez said he will make a case for Cuba to be included in regional talks, saying “we can no longer continue to accept the impositions of the U.S. empire.” “We ask only for respect for Venezuela, nothing else,” Chavez said. “If Obama respects us, we’ll respect him. If Obama tries to keep disrespecting Venezuela, we will confront the U.S. empire.” Chavez said he showed some of the U.S. administration’s



In this photo released by Miraflores Press Office, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, right, and Venezuela’s National Assembly President Cilia Flores raise arms during a signing ceremony of a new constitutional amendment in Caracas, Thursday, Feb. 19, 2009. Chavez won a referendum to eliminate term limits Sunday and vowed to remain in power for at least another decade to complete his socialist revolution. Associated Press

critical remarks about him to U.S. Rep. William Delahunt when the Massachusetts Democrat visited Caracas last week. “They keep pointing to me as the bad boy, as the one who attacks,” Chavez said. “Who stared the attack first? Obama.”



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		matinee: 12:55	3:10	late show: 12:05
R	GRAN TORINO	daily: 4:50	7:25	9:40
		matinee: 11:55	2:20	late show: 12:10
R	WATCHMEN	daily: 4:40	7:50	
		matinee: 1:25		late show: 11:00
PG	THE PINK PANTHER 2	daily: 4:00	6:20	8:20
		matinee: 12:00	2:05	late show: 10:20
R	THE INTERNATIONAL	daily: 4:55	7:20	9:50
		matinee: 12:05	2:30	late show: 12:20
PG	PAUL BLART: MALL COP	daily: 4:15	6:20	8:20
		matinee: 12:10	2:15	late show: 10:15

AT PASEO HERENCIA				
PG-13	MADEA GOESTO JAIL	daily: 5:30	7:45	10:00
		matinee: 1:00	3:20	late show: 12:20
R	WATCHMEN	daily: 4:40	8:00	
		matinee: 1:15		late show: 11:10
R	GRAN TORINO	daily: 4:55	7:15	9:45
		matinee: 12:00	2:30	late show: 12:10
R	THE INTERNATIONAL	daily: 4:50	7:20	9:50
		matinee: 11:55	2:25	late show: 12:15
PG	PAUL BLART: MALL COP	daily: 4:15	6:10	8:10
		matinee: 12:10	2:15	late show: 10:15
PG	THE PINK PANTHER 2	daily: 3:40	5:50	7:50
		matinee: 1:40		late show: 9:55

DRIVE-IN March 12 – March 15	
R	TAKEN
Thursday: 8:00	Friday: 8:00 & 10:30
PG	THE PINK PANTHER 2
Saturday: 8:00 & 10:30	Sunday: 8:00

Matinee: sat & sun | Late show: fri & sat

Report: Two detained U.S. reporters likely in Pyongyang

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
Associated Press Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Two American journalists detained by North Korean soldiers are believed to have been sent to Pyongyang for questioning, a news report said Sunday. North Korea said Saturday it was investigating two Americans it detained Tuesday for “illegally intruding” into its territory after crossing the border from China.

A brief dispatch from the North’s official Korean Central News Agency gave no other details, but it was apparent confirmation of reported arrests of two female U.S. journalists reporting on North Korean refugees in the border area.

South Korean media and a South Korean missionary identified the two detained Americans as Laura Ling and Euna Lee, reporters for former Vice President Al Gore’s San Francisco-based media outlet Current TV.

A U.S. official said Saturday that the U.S. has been in touch with North Korean representatives about the journalists and is awaiting a reply. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity citing the sensitivity of the issue, said the U.S. doesn’t know where the North is holding them. South Korea’s Yonhap news agency said Sunday, in a report from the Chinese city of Yanji, that it is highly likely that they were sent to Pyongyang to be investigated for their alleged border intrusion. “Considering the significance of the case, there is a high possibility that the two U.S. journalists have been sent to Pyongyang and are undergoing a direct investigation” by the North’s spy agency and military, Yonhap quoted a source in China it described as privy to North Korean affairs. Yonhap quoted other sources in China as saying the North’s confirmation of the arrest appeared

to demonstrate that Pyongyang’s intelligence and military headquarters are directly interrogating the journalists. Yonhap also said the North is expected to “politically” use the U.S. journalists in its negotiations with the U.S. government.

Ties between Washington and Pyongyang already have been strained over the North’s refusal to fully verify its past nuclear activities and its announced plan to launch a satellite into orbit in early April. U.S. and other regional powers argue the launch is a cover for a long-range missile test.

The two journalists, along with a male cameraman and a guide, were headed to Yanji, across the border from North Korea’s far northeastern corner, where they planned to interview women forced by human traffickers to strip for online customers and meet with children of defectors, according to the Rev. Chun Ki-won of the Seoul-based Durihana Mission, a Christian group that helps defectors.

Then they planned to travel to Dandong, said Chun who helped the journalists organize the trip. At the Yalu River near Dandong on Sunday, rifle-carrying North Korean soldiers across the river patrolled its bank. A group of men painted fishing boats on the North Korean side during low tide. Many North Korean children who grow up on the run in China live in legal limbo, unable even to attend school, according to a 2008 Human Rights Watch report.

The North Korean-Chinese border is long, porous and not well demarcated and thus a common route for escape from the North.

A growing number of North Koreans have sneaked into China to escape political repression and chronic food shortages and to seek asylum, mostly in South Korea, according to North Korean defectors in South Korea and activists.

Israel, Hamas say talks on prisoner swap not over

By MARK LAVIE

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — Both Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers said Sunday that talks aimed at freeing an Israeli soldier held nearly three years by Palestinian militants are not over, despite last week's public breakdown of Egyptian-mediated contacts.

Also, the exiled leader of Hamas said it's a "matter of time" before the Obama administration establishes contact with his group, according to an interview published Sunday.

Israeli Sgt. Gilad Schalit has been held by Hamas-linked militants in Gaza since June 2006, and Egypt hosted intensive talks last week aimed at a prisoner exchange.

When the talks ended, Olmert said Hamas demands were excessive and indicated he would turn the matter over to his successor, Benjamin Netanyahu, who is expected take office within two weeks. At a ceremony marking

Schalit's 1,000th day in captivity on Saturday, the soldier's father, Noam, implored Olmert to use his remaining time in office to pursue his son's release.

Olmert spokesman Mark Regev said the government was trying to reach a deal with Hamas.

"The government of Israel is committed to achieving the release of Gilad Schalit. The work is ongoing," he said. He provided no further details.

The head of Hamas' government in the Gaza Strip, Ismail Haniyeh, also indicated a deal was still possible in an article published Sunday in the Hamas newspaper Al-Ray.

Haniyeh blamed Israel for the breakdown in talks, but wrote, "Our people are still trying to renew the Egyptian-sponsored negotiations in order to reach a respectable prisoner exchange."

Exiled Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal was quoted by the Italian newspaper La Repubblica as saying that

Olmert was trying to threaten Hamas with the specter of Netanyahu, who takes a harder line toward the Palestinians. "We know that he's putting on a little show," Mashaal said of Olmert. "But it makes no difference to us. He's the one who is in a hurry to bring home a success, without paying a price for it."

Israel agreed to release hundreds of Hamas prisoners but balked at releasing some of the masterminds of suicide bombings that killed dozens of Israeli civilians.

Also in the interview, Mashaal said President Barack Obama was using a "new language" toward the Mideast conflict, and it was only a "matter of time" before Washington opens contacts with Hamas, as it plans to do with the main Hamas sponsor, Iran.

The U.S., along with the EU and Israel, list Hamas as a terror organization. A Hamas spokesman praised Saturday's failed attempt to explode a huge car bomb in a mall



Palestinian women, holding pictures of relatives held in Israeli jails, participate in a protest, calling for their release, outside of the ministry of the prisoners affairs, in Gaza City, Sunday, March 22, 2009. The outgoing Israeli government is pressing forward with its attempts to win the release of a captured Israeli soldier, a spokesman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Sunday, despite signs from the Israeli leader that no deal is likely during his last days in office.

Associated Press

parking lot in the Israeli port city of Haifa, an attack that police say could have killed hundreds.

Speaking before his Cabinet's weekly meeting Sunday, Olmert said preliminary

information showed the Haifa car bomb was dispatched by "a serious terror infrastructure that worked in sophisticated ways to carry out a terror attack with mass casualties."

U.S. pursues charges in 2007 attack in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — The U.S. Army has filed a criminal complaint in an Iraqi court against 12 people believed responsible for a May 2007 ambush in which seven U.S. soldiers were killed — three of them after they were captured, the U.S. said Sunday.

In an unusual announcement, the military said Lt. Col. Richard Ruffcorn, director of intelligence for the 10th Mountain Division, appeared in court March 11 to file the complaint, which is required under Iraqi law before charges can be brought.

"According to Iraqi law, someone must be present to file the complaint in person before suspects can be formally charged," Ruffcorn, of Omaha, Neb., said in a statement. "After all of our efforts to locate (the missing soldiers), I considered it an honor to stand on behalf of their families."

An al-Qaida front group, the Islamic State of Iraq, claimed responsibility for the ambush, which occurred in Youssifiyah south of

Baghdad on May 12, 2007.

Three of the seven killed — Staff Sgt. Alex Jimenez of New York City; Spc. Byron Fouty of Waterford, Mich. and Cpl. Joseph Anzack of Torrance, Calif. — were reported captured by insurgents.

Anzack's body was recovered from the Euphrates River 11 days later. Jimenez and Fouty remained missing for more than a year until their bodies were found and identified.

The 12 Iraqis alleged to have taken part in the attack are in custody, but a trial date has not been set.

Others killed in the ambush were Sgt. 1st Class James D. Connell of Lake City, Tenn.; Spc. Daniel W. Courneya of Nashville, Mich.; Cpl. Christopher E. Murphy of Lynchburg, Va. and Sgt. Anthony J. Schober of Reno, Nev.

Announcements of formal complaints in connection with specific fatal attacks against U.S. troops are unusual and reflect the military's outrage over the killings.

Wife of founder of Iran's Islamic republic dies

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — The wife of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the father of Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, has died after a long illness, state media reported Sunday. She was 93.

Khadijeh Saqafi, who was known as the "mother of the Islamic revolution," died Saturday in Tehran, state TV said. Thousands of people, including Iran's president and supreme leader, attended her funeral at Tehran University on Sunday.

"After a lifetime of patience and perseverance, and months of sick health, the dear and respected wife of Imam Khomeini has finally passed way, leaving friends of the late imam in grief," her grandson Hasan Khomeini said in a statement posted on the Web site of Iran's English-language state television station, Press TV.

Saqafi, who married Khomeini in 1931, stayed out of the public eye during much of her life. Former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani described her as the "closest and most patient" supporter of her husband and his struggle against the U.S.-backed shah's government, according to the state-run IRNA news agency.

Khomeini, who died in 1989, became the founder of the Islamic Republic after returning to Tehran on Feb. 1, 1979 after living 14 years in exile. Ten days later, the government of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi collapsed and the Islamic revolution was proclaimed. Khomeini later became Iran's first supreme leader.

After Sunday's funeral, Saqafi's body was carried Khomeini's mausoleum for burial, IRNA reported. The gold-domed shrine is located 10 miles south of Tehran. Saqafi is survived by three daughters. One of her son's, Ahmad, died in 1995 at the age of 50 after suffering a massive cardiac arrest. Another son, Mostafa, was killed in 1977 in Iraq.

U.S., disputing Afghans, says raid killed militants



Tow coffins of Afghans who were allegedly killed during a raid by U.S.-led coalition and Afghan troops are loaded in a vehicle in Imam Sahib district of Kunduz province, north of Kabul, Afghanistan on Sunday, March 22, 2009. U.S.-led coalition and Afghan troops killed five suspected militants during the raid on Sunday, the coalition said in a statement. But the local mayor said his house was targeted and that the dead included his cook and driver.

Associated Press

By AMIR SHAH coalition and Afghan troops
Associated Press Writer killed five suspected militants
KABUL (AP) — U.S.-led during a raid in northern

Afghanistan on Sunday, the coalition said in a statement. But the local mayor said his house was targeted and that the dead included his cook and driver.

Civilian deaths in coalition raids are an increasingly sensitive issue with President Hamid Karzai in the fight against the Taliban and other militants. The raids are often conducted with Afghan forces but the joint operations have done little to dampen anger at international troops over civilian casualties.

Such deaths turn residents against the foreign troops that back Karzai's government. But U.S. and NATO officials say militants regularly operate out of homes and portray dead fighters as civilians to stoke public anger.

Independent confirmation was impossible Sunday — as is often the case — because of the remoteness of the area.

Abdul Rahman Akhtash, the deputy provincial police chief, said about 300 people gathered to protest the raid.

A coalition statement said five militants were killed and four others were detained during the early morning raid targeting a "terrorist network" in Kunduz province, close to the border with Tajikistan.

It said one militant was killed in the initial assault on a compound, and the rest died after troops asked for noncombatants to leave the buildings and instead were "engaged with small arms fire." But Abdul Manan, mayor of Imam Sahib district, said the raid targeted his house and killed two of his guards, a cook, a driver and another man.

The Interior Ministry said only that "five of our countrymen" were killed in the mayor's house, and a spokesman declined to label them as either militants or civilians.

"The Interior Ministry is deeply sad about this and we are sending a delegation to investigate," the ministry said in a statement.

Manan said the helicopter-borne forces blew open the

compound gates. He said he was hunkered down inside a room with his wife and children and had no contact with the troops during the raid.

The coalition statement said "no women or children were present in the targeted attacks."

A record 2,118 civilians died in the Afghan war last year, a 40 percent increase over 2007, the U.N. has reported. It said U.S., NATO and Afghan forces killed 829 civilians, or 39 percent of the total.

Also Sunday, a roadside bomb exploded in eastern Khost province, killing one road construction worker and wounding 11 others who were traveling in a vehicle to their job northeast of Khost city, the Interior Ministry said in a statement.

Militants regularly plant roadside bombs targeting Afghan and foreign troops, but many of the victims have been civilians. The number of such attacks rose by 30 percent in 2008, according to NATO.

Sudan

Cont. from page 6



"I want to say from here that we are ready to expel the ambassadors if they exceed their diplomatic duties since our concern in Sudan is not to appease the others," he was quoted as saying. A group calling itself the Popular Committee for the Support of the President of the Republic, meanwhile, announced Saturday it will stage a sit-in until the president agrees to cancel his trip.

Sudanese columnist Tayeb Mustafa, an influential former head of the state press agency, took it one step further and suggested the Sudanese block the road to the airport to keep al-Bashir in the country. "If the president insists on traveling to Doha, we call on all Sudanese political organizations to come to the airport and prevent his departure," he wrote in his column Sunday.

4 charged in deadly biker airport brawl

SYDNEY (AP) — Police defended security levels at Australia's largest airport Monday after a man was beaten to death during a brawl by suspected rival biker gangs in one of Sydney's busiest terminals.

Four men were charged with affray — fighting in a public place — for the violence that occurred as terrified passengers watched on Sunday. They could face two years in prison.

State authorities held an urgent meeting Monday to consider introducing tougher laws against biker gangs, amid fears of an escalating gang war that has included drive-by shootings and a blast outside a fortified Hell's Angel's clubhouse. Sunday's death was the first casualty from the suspected gang-related clashes.

The fight erupted in one of Sydney airport's two domestic terminals when a group of suspected gang members was ambushed by another group from a rival gang as they disembarked from a flight.

Witnesses to the fighting said it was brutal. "They came running through picking up the big metal barrier poles and swinging them like swords at each other," Naomi Constantine told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "I saw one of the men lying on the ground and another man came up with a pole and just started smashing it into his head."

Police said 15 men were involved in the violence, which rampaged from the ground floor up one level to the departures hall before most of the men fled.

The four suspects were arrested away from the airport. An investigation was still under way to determine the cause of death of the man killed. Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty admitted the violence took them by surprise but said police officers responded quickly to emergency phone calls for help.

"The police can't be everywhere all the time and this is an event that could have happened anywhere in Australia," Keelty told reporters. Police have not identified the gangs suspected in the violence.

New South Wales state Premier Nathan Rees called a meeting with his police minister and other top officials Monday to consider whether to crack down on biker gangs with laws banning clubhouses and meetings of more than two or three gang members. Officials likened the measures to counterterrorism laws.

"These people have got to understand that's not the sort of behavior we tolerate in Australia and we'll be doing whatever we can to give police whatever powers they need to be able to stamp this out," state Police Minister Tony Kelly said.



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Canada's controversial seal hunt set to start

CAP-AUX-MEULES, Quebec (AP) — Canada's annual seal hunt is set to get under way Monday despite the continuing outcry of animal rights activists and an international effort to ban imported seal products. The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans said the smallest stage of the largest marine mammal hunt in the world will start in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. This year's total allowable catch has been set at 280,000, up from 275,000 last year. Seventy percent of the seals will be killed in an area off Newfoundland's north coast known as the Front, while 30 percent will be taken in the Gulf of St. Lawrence — the first stage of the hunt. Rebecca Aldworth, director of Humane Society International Canada, said the world community is starting to move away from the commercial seal slaughter and her group will be there to monitor the activities. "It's something we do every year. We come up here and we document what happens, but it never gets any easier," Aldworth said Sunday. The start of the hunt comes

three weeks after a European Parliament committee endorsed a bill that would impose a ban on the import of seal products to the 27-member union. The same bill granted an exemption to Canada's Inuit to continue to trade seal products for cultural, educational or ceremonial purposes. To become law the bill must be approved by the entire EU assembly and EU governments. The committee's decision came despite an intense lobbying effort by Canadian politicians looking to convince the European body that the commercial seal hunt is humane. Sheryl Fink, a researcher for the International Fund for Animal Welfare, said the move toward a ban is a sign the public's appetite for the seal hunt is waning. "We are optimistic that we are starting to see a bit of change," said Fink, whose group also plans to monitor the hunt. "I do think the writing's on the wall." The United States has banned Canadian seal products

since 1972. The Netherlands and Belgium also ban seal products. The European Union outlawed the sale of the white pelts of baby seals in 1983 and Russia announced earlier this month that it would ban the hunting of baby seals. Registered hunters in Canada are now not allowed to kill seal pups that haven't molted their downy white fur, typically when 10 to 21 days old. Animal rights groups say the seal hunt is cruel, difficult to monitor, ravages the seal population and doesn't provide a lot of money for sealers. Sealers and the Fisheries Department defend the hunt as sustainable, humane and well-managed and say it provides supplemental income for isolated fishing communities that have been hurt by the decline in cod stocks. Fishermen sell seal pelts mostly for the fashion industry in Norway, Russia and China, as well as blubber for oil. The 2006 take of some 335,000 seals brought in about \$25 million. The department estimates the total harp seal population to



A mother seal plays with a baby seal on the ice of the White Sea in Arkhangelsky region about 812 miles from Moscow, Russia, on Friday, March 13, 2009. Russia remains the only country in the world that permits the culling of newborn seal cubs, known as whitecoats. This bloody hunt should have been banned a long time ago, said Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin discussing the seal hunt in Russia at cabinet meeting on Feb. 26, 2009. Associated Press

be more than 5.5 million. The government says there were about 1.8 million seals in the 1970s, and the population rebounded after Canada started managing the hunts. Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, said the hunt is a significant source of income in many small, isolated coastal communities. She said they ensure the seal population is maintained. The seal hunt may be controversial in many places

but it has overwhelming support in Atlantic Canada. Earlier this year, Canadian Senator Mac Harb introduced an anti-sealing bill but he couldn't find a single colleague in the 105-seat Senate willing to second his motion to so it wasn't debated. Some of Harb's colleagues with more than two decades' Senate experience remarked that they could not recall another instance where a bill failed to find a seconder.

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PALM BEACH - There is only one Bugaloe on Aruba: it is the hottest place to be cool and the coolest place to be hot. Friends and fun are the main ingredients at the beach bar, but great food, drinks and music get a good second place. The sunsets, the breeze and the turquoise ocean are right at the top as well, of course. Bugaloe is located on De Palm Pier on the beach between the RIU Palace and the Radisson Resort at the Hi-Rise strip: an easy walk from all the major hotels.

People from all over the world get together at Bugaloe: they have a few drinks,

a bite to eat, they dance and sway and make new friends. If you have gotten curious here and now, check out the website www.bugaloe.com and you will see at one glance what we are talking about. No words will be needed anymore. Surf to the website for the Bugaloe Event Calendar or leave a note in the Guestbook.

Bugaloe's daily Happy Hours are considered the starting signal for an evening of partying on the island. Locals mingle with visitors and raise their glasses. When you get hungry, order a scrumptious burger, a gourmet pizza, tasty wings or a salad and party on. The night is young, the world is going crazy and you are right in the middle of a super happening. What's not to like? A twice-a-month live breakfast radio show on Fri-

day mornings with a spectacular breakfast buffet will keep you entertained as well.

A hot tip: Bugaloe Beach Bar puts on live bands on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Joyride, Lotus (YouTube keywords: lotus, bugaloe) and Marisela & Aquarius (YouTube keywords: marisela, confidential, 2008) are playing the stars from the sky. These bands are drawing the crowds, so be there or be square! On those nights the young as well as the young-at-heart are having the time of their lives. Photos of Bugaloe's happy times can be viewed at www.bugaloe.com. Don't forget to put your own movie of you and your friends having a whale of a time at Bugaloe on the web and enjoy being famous, crazy and hilarious. So upload, upload! We are looking forward to seeing you on YouTube or live in action.





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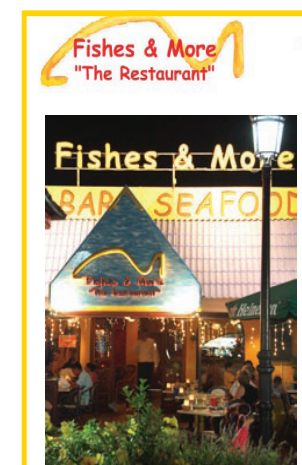
PALM BEACH - Fishes and More Restaurant opened up in the Arawak Gardens just 3 and a half years ago and has been a great success since day one. Word on the street is that once you eat at Fishes and More,

consider yourself addicted. The owners Jeroen Kuling and Hans Heijink together with the staff Romalo, Heidi, Mariella, Denise and Chef Gerben work hard keeping the restaurant open 7 days a week from 4 pm till 11pm for everyone to enjoy. The ambiance at the restaurant is out of this world, whether dining inside in the relaxed air-conditioned

dinning room or outside on the terrace to enjoy the tropical breeze and daily live music. Most guests come in early for the daily fresh catches, such as Red snapper, grouper, mahi mahi, wahoo and tuna. Check with the server to find out about the Catch of the day. The chef will be more than happy to prepare your fish the way you like it best: grilled, deep-fried, pan-fried or the chef's choice. Every Wednesday, seafood specials are prepared depending on what the Fishermen bring in fresh out of the water that afternoon. These



specials usually include fresh Caribbean lobster and pounds of peeled shrimps. Fishes and More is for everyone, from large groups, families, couples and even singles who can't shake the seafood addiction can stop in for a fix of Pina Colada Shrimp. For those who like to try something different or have had their fill of spectacular seafood, the chef prepares a wonderful array of filet mignon, rib eye, wiener schnitzel, veal parmesan, and pasta specialties. Great Seafood!!! Fun and relaxed atmosphere. Right across from the high rise hotels. It is worth the short walk to a wonderful dinner ☐



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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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Taste of Belgium – The Chocolaterie



ORANJESTAD - The Renaissance Mall in the heart of Oranjestad offers world class shopping, stunning designer stores and fantastic buys. While the search for ultimate happiness is on full blast one might pass by Taste of Belgium's Chocolaterie, a slice of paradise for anyone with a sweet tooth. The name Callebaut will ring a bell with knowledgeable chocolate lovers: they know that the only the very best is good enough.

Coming in all kinds of shapes and designs, the

chocolates of Taste of Belgium follow the latest trends and are always the height of fashion.

The store is of course at its very best during Valentine's, Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas, but recently Halloween also has become a major highlight, with very funny and scary sweets.

The elegant shop's

decorations are invariably stunning. The chocolaterie's small terrace is doing a booming business as a café and cappuccinos, lattes and frappes are served with delicious pastries, cakes or sandwiches. Seated in a comfortable chair one can witness formerly drooping shoppers continue their quest revived and full of energy after a spell at Taste of Belgium ☐



TASTE OF BELGIUM

The chocolaterie forms part of the 'One delicious island' Taste of Belgium family, which consists of the popular Bistro in the Paseo Herencia Mall across from the Holiday Inn Resort, the recently opened Papillon Restaurant at The Village, where casual fine dining and a superb French-Caribbean cuisine is drawing those with unerringly good taste, and the Taste of Belgium Catering Service at Bubali for any of your parties, luncheons, dinners, weddings or receptions.

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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Wall St Week Ahead: Investors banking on toxic plan



A television screen displays images of AIG chairman and CEO Edward Liddy testifying on Capitol Hill, as traders work the floor at the New York Stock Exchange March 18, 2009 in New York City. Top US senators expressed disquiet Sunday over a populist bill aimed at taxing nearly all of AIG-style bonuses, querying whether it was constitutional and if it might delay economic recovery.

(AFP/Getty Images/File/Spencer Platt)

By Deepa Seetharaman
NEW YORK (Reuters) – Wall Street's attempt to recover further from 12-year lows faces its biggest test yet this week in the Treasury's long-delayed bank rescue plan.

But skeptics abound after reports this weekend revealed a plan coupling old approaches with several new twists.

Concerns about the lack of investor interest last week in the government's new fund aimed at reviving consumer and small-business lending, called the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility (TALF), rippled through the U.S. stock market, sending major indexes down about 2 percent on Friday.

"I don't think the market will jump up and down on this (new plan)," Chip Hanlon, president of Delta Global Advisors Inc, in Huntington Beach, California, said on Sunday.

"This is an alphabet soup of brilliant new ideas" that come on the heels of several failed efforts, he added.

The plan incorporates a three-pronged approach that includes the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp offering low-interest loans to private investors for buying up banks' soured assets, a source familiar with the plan said on Saturday.

The Treasury Department will also revive a recent idea to hire fund

managers to run a public-private fund that invests for potential profit in troubled mortgages, with government capital matching private capital contributions and the Federal Reserve will expand the \$1 trillion TALF to buy old assets weighing on bank balance sheets.

Analysts herald the toxic-asset plan as integral to jolting the recession-hit economy at a time when unemployment and jobless claims notch multiyear highs.

The weakness of the economy will likely be highlighted by reams of economic data, including sales of new and existing homes, a final reading on fourth-quarter gross domestic product and weekly jobless claims.

Indications on the consumer's state of mind may come from quarterly results from closely watched names such as electronics retailer Best Buy Co (BBY.N) and an expected wave of pre-announcements about earnings, as well as a final reading on March consumer sentiment and a report on February personal income and consumption.

Still, the bank plan more than any other factor probably will be in the forefront of investors' minds. "Pretty much everything else is going to be background noise to the core issue: confidence in banks," said Eric Kubly, chief investment officer for North Star Investment Management Corp,

in Chicago.

ALL ABOUT BANKS

Stocks rose last week, emboldened by news that the Federal Reserve would take bold steps to expand its balance sheet and purchase mortgage-backed securities. Still the Fed move underscored the extent of the economy's weakness and worries over unintended consequences of the central bank's decision, which spurred a sell-off late in the week.

For the week, the Dow gained 0.75 percent and the S&P 500 added 1.58 percent, while the Nasdaq climbed 1.80 percent.

Before news of the new three-pronged effort, investors had been anticipating details on the closely related Public Private Investment Fund, or PPIF -- first proposed last month in only very broad terms by U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner.

Some government officials have said the plan could be modeled on the Fed's \$200-billion Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility, known as TALF.

But the lackluster reception of the first TALF auction on Thursday suggests there will be challenges for the bank recovery plan.

Additionally, lobbyists said the drama over bonuses for workers at American International Group (AIG.N) was prompting private investors to hesitate about participating in the program.

Funding for the bank plan and the pricing of those bad assets are key issues that investors will be keen to get more details on, Praveen said.

A disappointing plan could set the stage for a sharp, swift slide in the stock market, but a well-designed one could serve as a catalyst for further gains.

"Two things have really roiled the market place throughout the cycle -- the lack of clarity at the policy-maker level and the pattern of the rules changing in the middle of the game," said Craig Peckham, equity trading strategist at Jefferies & Company in New York.

"If we can assuage those concerns with the 'bad bank-good bank' plan, that will help."

CHECKING THE CONSUMER'S PULSE

Friday's reports on March consumer sentiment and February personal income, as well as earnings from companies like

Walgreen (WAG.N) and Tiffany & Co (TIF.N), may provide further clues on consumer psychology. Existing home sales for February are due on Monday, while new home sales for that month will be released on Wednesday.

"By and large, things are getting less bad overall," Peckham said. "Dare I say it? We're starting to scratch the bottom of consumer spending."

But obstacles could come from Wednesday's data on February durable goods orders and the final reading on fourth-quarter gross domestic product on Thursday.

Last month's preliminary reading showed the economy contracted at an annual rate of 6.2 percent in the final three months of 2008.

Economists polled by Reuters on average expect the final reading on fourth-quarter GDP to show a drop of 6.5 percent, but some estimates call for a decline of 6.9 percent.

A downward revision "might give some negative sentiment that things are even much worse than what we were looking for," Praveen said.

But "a positive revision might give a little bit of a relief."

GM bondholders raise concerns with U.S. task force

DETROIT (Reuters) – Bondholders holding some \$27 billion of General Motors Corp (GM.N) debt on Sunday sent a letter to the White House task force overseeing the bailout of the auto industry, to register concern with the lack of progress in GM's debt restructuring talks.

In an open letter to U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and other members of the U.S. autos task force, representatives of GM bondholders said they had not had a response from U.S. officials or GM since proposing terms for a debt swap earlier this month.

"Keeping lines of



communications open is the only way we all can meet the March 31 deadline for a debt-to-equity exchange," the letter said. "We are disappointed that we have had no response to our proposal from either GM or the auto task force."

The letter on behalf of GM bondholders was signed by advisers to an ad hoc committee negotiating a debt restructuring with the automaker prompted by the terms of its \$13.4 billion bailout.

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Goosen wins the Transitions Championship

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

PALM HARBOR, Fla. — Retief Goosen took an important step toward rejoining the elite in golf Sunday by closing with a 1-under 70 for a one-shot victory in the Transitions Championship, his first PGA Tour win in nearly four years.

Goosen had a two-shot lead with three holes to play on the demanding Copperhead Course at Innisbrook, when just like everyone else, he struggled to hang on. The two-time U.S. Open champion barely made it.

Needing only two putts from 25 feet for the win, he watched his first putt roll 5 feet past the hole. His par putt curled in the side of the cup, giving him a one-shot victory over Charles Howell III and Brett Quigley.

“Eventually, you wonder if you can still do it,” Goosen said.

Howell, an Augusta, Ga., native who has to win over the next two weeks to earn a trip to the Masters, made bogeys on the 15th and 16th holes, and couldn’t find any birdies to catch up. He shot a 69 for his best finish since winning at Riviera two years ago.

Quigley is now 0-for-342 in his 13 years on the PGA Tour, but he was bogey-free on the back nine and closed with a 68 for his second runner-up finish in as many weeks.

Former Ryder Cup captain Tom Lehman, trying to become the seventh player in his 50s to win on the PGA Tour, did not make a birdie until a long putt on the 17th hole, and he shot a 75 to tie for eighth.

Goosen, a 40-year-old South African who was part of the “Big Three” in the world ranking three years ago, nearly fell out of the top 50 until he overcame some problems with corrective eye surgery and worked hard on his fitness, dropping some 20 pounds.

He won on the South African and Asian tours during the fall, but this was a big breakthrough — especially with the Masters coming up.



The gallery watches as Retief Goosen, of South Africa, tees off on the 18th hole during the final round of the Transitions Championship golf tournament Sunday, March 22, 2009, at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor, Fla. Goosen won the tournament shooting an eight-under-par 276.

Associated Press

Pat Hurst wins Mastercard Classic

By TRACI CARL

Associated Press Writer

HUIXQUILUCAN, Mexico (AP) — Pat Hurst shot a 4-under 68 Sunday to beat top-ranked Lorena Ochoa and Yani Tseng by one stroke at the Mastercard Classic.

Hurst sank a long putt on the 18th green at the tough BosqueReal Country Club to finish at 10-under 206. No. 1 ranked Ochoa (69) had three bogeys and six birdies, while Tseng (70) had three bogeys and five birdies.

“The 17th and 18th coming in was very exciting,” said Hurst, who won for the first time since 2006. “I just tried not to get ahead of myself out there, and we made it happen.”

Tseng had led until the last hole.

“I just feel really sad,” she said, wiping away tears. “I just don’t know what to say.”

Ochoa was also disappointed,

saying she had a “complicated day” and that her frustration at not being able to beat this course got the best of her.

The steep and scrubby course outside Mexico City has always been tough for Ochoa. She has yet to win the Mastercard Classic in five attempts. Last year, she opened with a 4-over 76 — her worst score in nearly a year — and ended up tying for eighth.

But Ochoa’s fans were convinced this year would be different. They packed the sun-drenched hillsides to watch the Mexican native play. And as she walked onto the 18th green, chants of “Mexico!” and “Lorena!” filled the scrubby valleys.

Some of Ochoa’s most enthusiastic fans are pre-teen, pony-tailed Mexican girls who follow her career as if she were a pop star.

Ochoa still has two other



US’ Pat Hurst kisses her trophy after winning the LPGA Mastercard Classic golf tournament in Huixquilucan, Mexico, Sunday, March 22, 2009. Hurst shot a 4-under 68 to beat top-ranked Mexico’s Lorena Ochoa and Taiwan’s Yani Tseng.

Associated Press

chances for victory on her home turf this year. She will be back in Mexico next month for the Corona Championship in Morelia. The Lorena Ochoa Invitational is in November in Guadalajara, Ochoa’s hometown.

Condoleezza Rice speaks at NFL meetings

By BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

DANA POINT, California (AP) — Condoleezza Rice finally got her chance to address the NFL. Judging by the numerous standing ovations she received, Rice scored a touchdown.

The Secretary of State under the Bush administration, who once aspired to be the league’s commissioner, was invited by Roger Goodell to speak to the “NFL family” Sunday at the owners meetings. She spoke to several hundred people about everything from football to politics to the need for American optimism in a trying time.

“I am prepared to answer any questions on Russia, the Middle East, advice for the draft, the zone blitz,” Rice said, drawing laughs from everyone, especially Goodell. “And why no one should ever run a prevent defense.”

Rice was mentioned as a potential candidate to replace Paul Tagliabue, and Goodell thanked her “when you were busy three years ago when they selected a commissioner.”

“I’ve invited somebody who wants my job in front of the same people who hired me,” Goodell joked.

To which Rice responded, “It’s true, when I was talking with the Russians and ... the Iranians and Venezuelans, your job seemed like a pretty good one to me.”

Rice praised the NFL for its efforts in internationalizing the game.

“What the NFL does abroad is a part of public diplomacy,” she said. “To try to use sports and sports diplomacy to present the values we stand for, to give people a little different outlook at what we stand for (as Americans).”

NCCA Tournament Roundup

Young's 32 points lifts Pittsburgh into next round

DAYTON, Ohio (AP)—Sam Young scored 32 points and DeJuan Blair added another double-double as top-seeded Pittsburgh advanced to the round of 16 for the fifth time in eight years with an 84-76 win over Oklahoma State on Sunday.

Pittsburgh (30-4) will play Xavier in the East Regional semifinals in Boston on Thursday.

Obi Muonelo scored 19 points for the eighth-seeded Cowboys (23-12), who gave the Panthers all they could handle before losing their touch in the final minutes. Oklahoma State made 10 3-pointers in the first half but made only two of 12 from long range after halftime.

The Panthers, who played poorly and barely escaped a first-round upset against No. 16 seed East Tennessee State, showed a champion's poise down the stretch.

The Cowboys tied it at 74-all with 2:42 left on an inside shot by Marshall Moses.

But Pitt point guard Levance Fields drove for a layup, and after OSU's James Anderson missed a 3-pointer, Fields dropped a 3-pointer from up top to make it 79-74 with 1:27 left.

Xavier 60, Wisconsin 49

At Boise, Idaho, B.J. Raymond scored 15 points and Xavier finally broke through Wisconsin's defense midway through the second half.

The Musketeers (27-7) struggled as the Badgers controlled the pace for the first 30 minutes. Xavier pulled away with a 13-4 run and hung onto the lead from the foul line.

Derrick Brown added 15 points and C.J. Anderson had eight rebounds for fourth-seeded Xavier.

Midwest Regional

Louisville 79, Siena 72

At Dayton, Ohio, Terrence Williams had 24 points and 15 rebounds, rallying the top-seeded Cardinals to a victory

over the Saints in the second round.

Louisville (30-5) advanced to the round of 16 for the second straight year. The Cardinals will play 12th-seeded Arizona in the Midwest Regional on Friday in Indianapolis.

Siena (27-8) overcame a 12-point deficit in the second half and led by four before Williams took over.

Edwin Ubiles scored 24 points for the Saints.

Michigan State 74, USC 69

At Minneapolis, Travis Walton scored 18 points to lift the second-seeded Spartans into the round of 16 for the eighth time in 12 years.

Durell Summers added 11 points and eight rebounds for Michigan State (28-6), which has advanced to the regional semifinals more times in the last dozen years than any team but Duke.

The Spartans will play third-seeded Kansas on Friday in Indianapolis.

Dwight Lewis scored 19 points and DeMar DeRozan added 18 points for USC (22-13).

Kansas 60, Dayton 43

At Minneapolis, Cole Aldrich posted a triple-double with 13 points, 20 rebounds and 10 blocked shots to lead defending champion Kansas past 11th-seeded Dayton.

The 6-foot-11 Jayhawks sophomore nearly matched the NCAA tournament record for blocks in a game of 11 set by Shaquille O'Neal for LSU in 1992. Shawn Bradley had 10 in 1991 for BYU.

Sherron Collins had 25 points to pace the third-seeded Jayhawks (27-7).

Arizona 71, Cleveland State 57

At Miami, Nic Wise and 12th-seeded Arizona again adapted well to its spot as a tournament long shot, building an early 14-point lead and eliminating Cleveland State.

The Wildcats are appearing in the tournament for the

25th year in a row, two shy of the record. But they've never been seeded so low and drew criticism as undeserving of a berth.

Wise scored 21 points to lead four double-figure scorers for the Wildcats (21-13).

South Regional

Syracuse 78, Arizona State 67

At Miami, Eric Devendorf hit a pair of 3-pointers less than a minute apart to halt a big Arizona State rally as the third-seeded Orange held on to advance.

Devendorf finished with 21 points and Andy Rautins added 17 for Syracuse (28-9), which moves on to play second-seeded Oklahoma (29-5) in Memphis on Friday.

Rihards Kuksiks scored a career-high 20 points, and Ty Abbott also finished with 20 for the sixth-seeded Sun Devils (25-10). James Harden, the Pac-10 player of the year, was held to 10 points — all in the second half.

West Regional

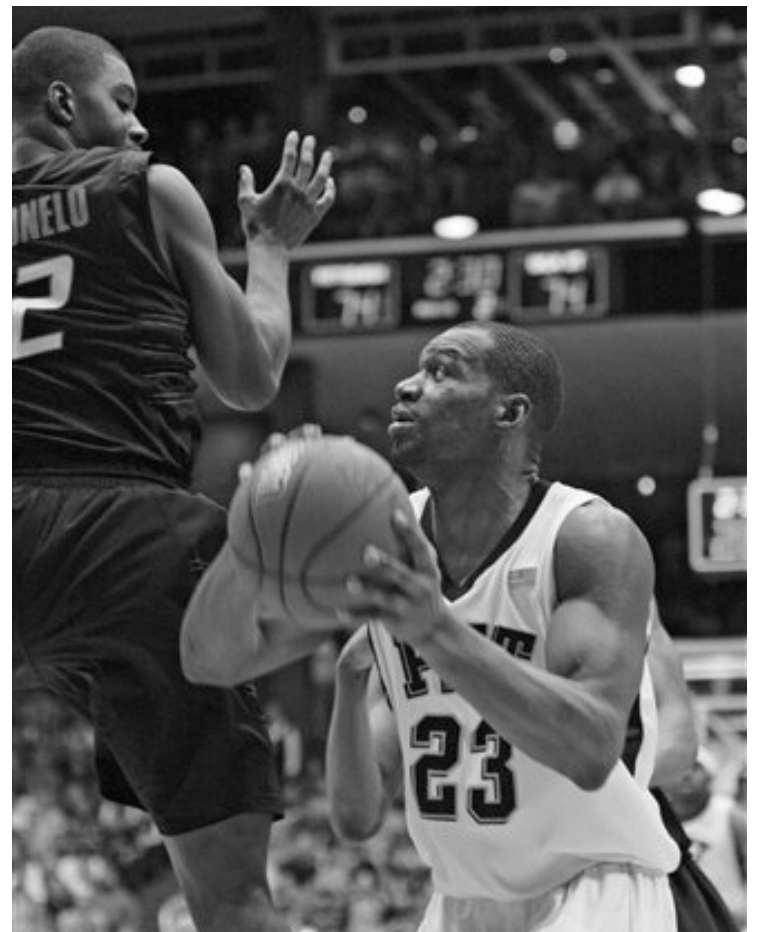
Missouri 83, Marquette 79

At Boise, Idaho, Kim English came off the bench to "pinch shoot" and made two free throws with 5.5 seconds left to lift the Tigers.

It was quite an encore for English, who scored 15 points during one 4½ minute stretch in the first half and helped third-seeded Mizzou (30-6) turn a six-point deficit into a 16-point lead.

Jerel McNeal matched his career high with 30 points in helping Marquette rally. Wesley Matthews scored 24, but it wasn't enough.

Lazar Hayward stepped over the baseline on the inbounds pass after English's clutch foul shots, and the Golden Eagles were forced to foul. Leo Lyons made two more free throws and Missouri moved onto the West Regional semifinals to play Memphis.



Pittsburgh's Sam Young (23) avoids Oklahoma State's Obi Muonelo (2) on a shot in the second half of a second-round NCAA men's college basketball tournament game Sunday, March 22, 2009, in Dayton, Ohio. Young scored 32 points to lead Pittsburgh past Oklahoma State 84-76 to advance to the Sweet 16.

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Busch dominates at Bristol for 2nd win of season



Kyle Busch waves the checkered flag as he takes a reverse victory lap after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup Food City 500 auto race in Bristol, Tenn., Sunday, March 22, 2009. Associated Press

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

BRISTOL, Tenn. — Kyle

Busch has dominated Bristol Motor Speedway before,

only to be denied a trip to

Victory Lane.

Not this time.

Busch led 378 of 502 laps on Sunday to win at Bristol, his second victory of the season. It was redemption for Busch, who lost his power steering while leading last spring and was bumped from the front in August by Carl Edwards after leading 415 laps.

And he was well on his way to victory in the Nationwide Series race on Saturday, leading a race-high 157 laps before his crew let a tire slip away on the final pit stop. The ensuing penalty knocked him out of contention and he finished sixth.

“We should have won here last fall, we should have won

here yesterday,” Busch said. “This place probably owes me a few. But you can never ask a race track to pay you back. You just have to just keep working on it.”

Busch has now won a race in one of NASCAR’s top three series every weekend this season. It started with a victory in the non-points qualifying race at Daytona and followed with wins in the Truck and Nationwide Series at California, the Cup race at Las Vegas, and the Nationwide race at Atlanta. He was untouchable in his Toyota in Sunday’s Cup race, even to teammate Denny Hamlin, who followed him across the finish line.

“Man, it’s great to get a 1-2,” Hamlin said of the Joe Gibbs Racing dominance.

Hamlin has had his own heartbreak at Bristol — he led 98 laps last spring and was headed to the win when a fuel pickup problem cost him the victory. He finished third, again behind Busch, in August.

Defending three-time series champion Jimmie Johnson was third in a Chevrolet to tie his career-best Bristol finish, back in 2004. Johnson had devoted a good deal of time to figuring out why he’s struggled at Bristol, and the homework with crew chief Chad Knaus clearly paid off. “What a day for us. I wish we had 500 more laps to go,” he said. “I have to thank Chad and the engineering staff for sitting me down a couple weeks ago to look at this race track and what I need here. I

made my wish list and they gave me what I needed.”

Jeff Gordon, his teammate at Hendrick Motorsports, was fourth.

Kasey Kahne was fifth in a Dodge and followed by polesitter Mark Martin, Ryan Newman, defending race winner Jeff Burton and Juan Pablo Montoya.


Marcos Ambrose, in the spotlight after his gas man chased a tire across pit road two weeks ago at Atlanta, finished 10th.


A Busch brother has won the past three races. Kyle Busch won at Las Vegas earlier this month, and Kurt followed it with a win at Atlanta. Kurt Busch, a five-time Bristol winner, finished 11th on Sunday.

Travis Kvapil finished 18th in what was likely his final race for Yates Racing. The No. 28 team probably will be closed down on Monday morning due to a lack of sponsorship, making it the first casualty this year of the weakened economy. Several teams were shuttered last season as sponsorship became difficult to find during the economic crisis.

Yates racing general manager Max Jones said before the race he’d bring the No. 28 team back to the track if funding came through, but the team had paid out of pocket for the first five races this season and couldn’t afford to do so any longer. Bobby Labonte and Paul Menard also drive for Yates, but have full sponsorship.

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NBA Roundup

Rockets beat Spurs 87-85

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Luis Scola dropped in the winning layup with 11.2 seconds left after a bullet pass from Yao Ming as the Houston Rockets rallied in the fourth to wrest first place in the division from the San Antonio Spurs with an 87-85 victory Sunday.

Ron Artest scored 24 as Houston won its fifth straight to reclaim the top spot in the division for the first time since Christmas. The Rockets lead San Antonio by a half-game.

Tim Duncan scored 23 points for the Spurs, whose grip on the No. 2 spot in the West disappeared when Matt Bonner's 3-pointer at the buzzer clanked off the rim.

Scola finished with 19 points and 17 rebounds for Houston, which trailed by five midway through the fourth before storming back.

Tony Parker had 22 points and 12 assists but missed a tough 7-footer with 2.9 seconds left with San Antonio trailing by one.

Heat 101, Pistons 96

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Dwyane Wade scored 39 points for Miami and Udonis Haslem hit the go-ahead jumper with 6.3 seconds left.

Wade also blocked two shots in the final 30 seconds, helping fifth-place Miami stretch its lead over Detroit to three games in the Eastern Conference standings.

Rodney Stuckey scored 24 points and Antonio McDyess had 16 points and 14 rebounds for the seventh-place Pistons.

Walter Hermann's baseline 3-pointer gave the Pistons a 96-95 lead with 13 seconds left.

Mario Chalmers missed at the other end, but Haslem grabbed the rebound and hit a high-arching shot to put the Heat back in front for good.

Detroit led for most of the game despite missing three key players — Richard Hamilton (groin), Rasheed Wallace (calf) and Allen Iverson (back).

Raptors 100, Clippers 76

At Toronto, Chris Bosh had

16 points and 13 rebounds and Shawn Marion added 14 points and 13 boards for Toronto.

Jose Calderon scored 15 points and Joey Graham added 13 for the Raptors, who have won five of six against the Clippers.

The Raptors had lost nine of 10 coming in but had little difficulty handling the struggling Clippers, leading by as many as 28 in a runaway fourth quarter.

Toronto outrebounded Los Angeles 57-34. Zach Randolph scored 20 points and Baron Davis added 12 for the Clippers, who have won just two of their past 12.

The Clippers have not won on the road since a 121-97 victory at Atlanta on Feb. 7.

Los Angeles is 7-27 overall on the road and has lost eight straight away from home.

Thunder 97, Timberwolves 90

At Minneapolis, Kevin Durant scored 30 points and Jeff Green added 17 to lead Oklahoma City to the victory.

Durant has scored more than



Houston Rockets' Luis Scola (4), of Argentina, begins to celebrate in the closing moments of the Rockets' 87-85 win over the San Antonio Spurs in an NBA basketball game in San Antonio on Sunday, March 22, 2009.
Associated Press

20 points in 16 of his last 17 games for the Thunder, who improved to 7-5 in their last 12 games. His lone exception during that span came Feb. 27 at Dallas, when he logged only eight minutes after spraining his right ankle.

Craig Smith scored 19 points and Bobby Brown fueled a late Wolves run with 12 points in the fourth quarter.

Rodney Carney had 12 of his 15 points in the fourth and Kevin Love finished with 10 for Minnesota, which trailed

by as many as 32.

Hornets 99, Warriors 89

At New Orleans, Chris Paul scored 27 points and David West added 23 for the Hornets' third win in a row.

Stephen Jackson led Golden State with 22 points and 10 rebounds. Kelenna Azubuike added 16 points after missing his first eight shots.

The Warriors, who shot a season-best 56.5 percent against Philadelphia on Friday, connected on only 13 of 43 attempts in the first half.

Goosen Wins

Continued from page 16

Goosen finished at 8-under 276 and won for the seventh time on the PGA Tour. It was his second victory at Innisbrook, having won in 2003 when it was played in the fall.

This looked more like June with greens so crusty and firm that the grass began dying on the weekend and some shots were difficult to hold. It was similar to Shinnecock Hills, where Goosen won his second U.S. Open in 2004.

"It definitely got like Shinnecock," he said. "You couldn't hit them soft enough."

Lehman, who turned 50 two weeks ago, had a one-shot lead going into the final round as he tried to become the first ex-Ryder Cup captain since Tom Watson in 1998 to win on the PGA Tour.

He hit a poor chip on the second hole that led to bogey and cost him the lead. That led to a revolving door of challengers, with five players

atop the leaderboard at various points during the final round. But the back nine was more about hanging on than forging ahead.

And for so many, it was about falling apart.

Steve Stricker rallied from a four-shot deficit to tie for the lead, but he couldn't sustain it. After two solid par saves, he flew the green from a bunker on the par-3 17th for bogey, then missed the green from the middle of the 18th fairway and made another bogey. He closed with a 69 and tied for fourth.

It was the third time this year Stricker had the lead on the back nine and failed to win.

Charlie Wi chipped in twice on the front nine and made the turn with the outright lead, reaching 9 under until he was undone on the par 3s. Wi came up right and short on the 13th, leaving him a difficult pitch to a back-right pin, and he had to scramble for bogey. He missed the 15th green to the right and had to work for bogey again.

Howell, who has not missed

the Masters since 2002, caught Goosen with a 12-foot birdie on the 14th. But his next tee shot was buried in deep rough just right of the 15th green, and with only 25 feet to the pin, flubbed his chip. He made bogey, then missed the 16th green well to the right and made another bogey.

"You ride on such a thin line on a track like this, where you just know every bogey hurts more than most, because you know it's so much harder to make up," Howell said.

Of the top 10 finishers, Quigley was the only player not to make bogey on the back nine.

Goosen had only two sub-par holes, but they were big. He chipped in from about 40 feet behind the ninth green to stay in the hunt, then took the outright lead two holes later with a 5-iron that barely cleared the bunkers and rolled to the back of the green for his eagle.

He made six pars over the final seven holes, which is all he needed.

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Rafael Nadal, of Spain, celebrates winning during the men's final against Andy Murray at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, Calif., Sunday, March 22, 2009. Nadal won 6-1, 6-2.

Associated Press

Nadal downs Murray to take Indian Wells title

By KEN PETERS

AP Sports Writer

INDIAN WELLS, California (AP) — Rafael Nadal powered his way to a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Andy Murray on a windy Sunday at the BNP Paribas Open, winning his second Indian Wells title in three years.

The top-ranked Nadal's low, hard groundstrokes gave him an edge in the gusty conditions over Murray, whose game relies more on pace and a mix of shots.

Nadal, a 22-year-old Spaniard, added the championship to the Australian Open title he won earlier this year, and avenged a loss to eventual champion Murray in the Rotterdam final.

Vera Zvonareva defeated defending champion Ana Ivanovic 7-6 (5), 6-2 to win the women's title. Zvonareva a day earlier teamed with Victoria Azarenka to take the women's doubles.

Nadal rode his usual powerful forehands to the lopsided win over Murray, hitting 10 winners from that side to Murray's one. Nadal also was efficient at the net, winning eight of 11 points to Murray's 5-of-10.

"The conditions today were really difficult. But I think I had a good strategy and played a really good match under these conditions," Nadal said. "Probably Andy didn't play his best because of the conditions, but I think I played a really complete match, moving very well.

"I never stopped the legs during the match and I think that was the key. Maybe I accepted the conditions a little bit better than him. Maybe I had a little bit more positive attitude than him."

With the swirling wind making the service toss difficult, neither player served an ace.

"Maybe I was a little bit more prepared," Nadal said. "I tried to play inside the court, go to the net some, move all the time. It's important that you know you don't have to find the lines all the time, but hit the ball inside, not so close to the lines."

Murray said, "Rafa dealt with it well. He hit the ball cleaner and just seemed to get himself in better positions than I did. You want to be in the best position possible to hit each ball and I wasn't. That's why he managed to dictate most of the points."

Zvonareva was the steadier player in the women's title match.

With the gusts making even some routine shots extremely tricky, the 24-year-old Russian made far fewer mistakes than her Serbian opponent.

Zvonareva joined Lindsay Davenport as the only women to win the singles and doubles title at Indian Wells in the same year. Davenport did it twice, in 1997 and 2000.

In the singles final this time, the wind swirled around the stadium, with both players often tossing the ball to serve only to have to catch it and try again.

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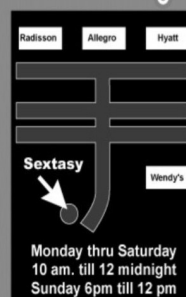
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Gobierno de presidente Chávez asume puertos y aeropuertos en Venezuela

CARACAS (AP) - El presidente Hugo Chávez anunció el sábado que el Ejecutivo asumió, con el apoyo de militares, los principales puertos y aeropuertos del país, la mayoría de los cuales estaban en manos de gobernadores opositores que rechazaron la medida alegando que era violatoria de la Constitución.

Chávez dijo a la estatal Venezolana de Televisión (VTV), durante un encuentro con el Consejo de Ministros, que los puertos y aeropuertos de las localidades de Maracaibo, Valencia, Puerto Cabello, Puerto La Cruz y la Isla de Margarita están "bajo control del gobierno nacional" desde primeras horas del día.

Varias decenas de militares fueron apostados el sábado en esas instalaciones de las localidades de Maracaibo, Valencia, Puerto Cabello e Isla de Margarita para ejecutar la toma, constató la AP.

Las terminales fueron manejadas hasta ahora por las gobernaciones opositoras del Zulia, Carabobo y Nueva Esparta.

El presidente indicó que en el caso del aeropuerto y puerto del estado oriental de Anzoátegui, que es controlado por un gobernador aliado a su gobierno, el proceso de transferencia se desarrolló con normalidad.

Chávez señaló que su gobierno elaborará un "plan estratégico de inversión" para modernizar los puertos y aeropuertos, que será desarrollado por

corporaciones nacionales. Asimismo, garantizó la estabilidad para los miles de trabajadores que laboran en esas dependencias.

La Asamblea Nacional, conformada en su mayoría por aliados de Chávez, aprobó la semana pasada una reforma a la ley de descentralización que autoriza al Ejecutivo para intervenir las autopistas, puertos y aeropuerto que estén bajo control de las gobernaciones y alcaldías.

Chávez realizó la toma de los puertos y aeropuertos basado en la nueva regulación que la oposición sostiene que viola de la Constitución que prevé que es "competencia exclusiva de los estados" todo lo relacionado con la "administración y aprovechamiento de carreteras y autopistas nacionales, así como de puertos y aeropuertos de uso comercial, en coordinación con el Ejecutivo".

Algunos analistas sostienen


que la decisión de Chávez de tomar los puertos y aeropuertos lo que busca es limitar financieramente a las gobernaciones.

El mandatario fustigó el sábado las protestas de opositores en rechazo a la toma de los puertos y aeropuertos, y por la acusación por enriquecimiento ilícito que realizó la Fiscalía General contra el alcalde de Maracaibo y líder opositor, Manuel Rosales.

Chávez denunció que la

oposición estaría llamando a una "rebelión popular" e incitando una sublevación militar. Asimismo advirtió que "a la rebelión popular ¿saben quién puede llamar? Yo pudiera, ustedes no, pitayanquis".


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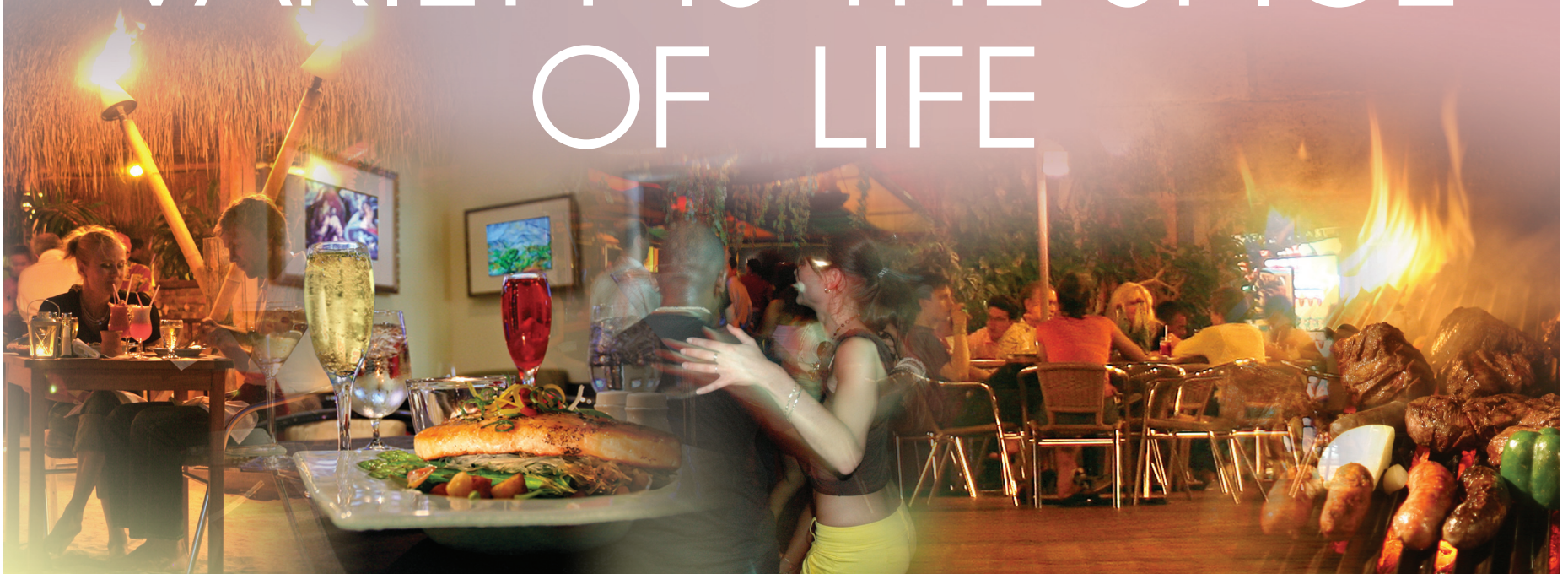


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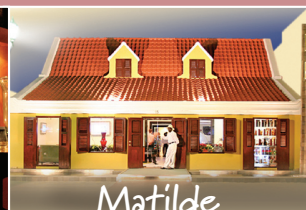
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